

THE
WORKS
OF
MOLIERE.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

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Printed by ROBERT URIE,

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THE

WORKS

OF



VOLUME SECOND

C. L. A. S. S. I. C. S.

Printed by Robert D. ...

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...

SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS

THE C. A. S. R.

SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

COMEDY.

A 2

54

A C T O R S.

SGANAREL, } Brothers.

ARISTO, }

ISABELLA, }

LEONORA, }

Sisters.

VALERE, Lover to Isabella.

LISSETTA, Waiting-Woman to Leonora.

ERGASTE, Valet to Valere.

COMMISSARY.

NOTARY.

TWO FOOTMEN.



SCENE, a public Place in PARIS.

THE
SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SGANAREL, ARISTO.

SGANAREL.

PRAY, brother, don't let us talk so much, but let each of us live according to his inclination; tho' you have the advantage over me in years, and are old enough to be wise, I must tell you, notwithstanding, that I don't intend to bear reproofs from you: that my fancy is the only director I have to follow, and I am well pleas'd with living after my own manner.

Aristo. But every body condemns it.

Sganarel. Ay, fools like you, brother,

Aristo. Thank ye; the compliment is kind.

Sganarel. I'd fain know, since all must out, what these fine Cavillers can find in me to reprove?

Aristo. That surly temper, the severity of which shuns all the pleasures of society, gives a whimsical air to all you do, and renders all about you barbarous, even to your very habit.

Sganarel. I should make myself a slave to the fashion, to be sure, and it's not for myself that I ought to dress myself;---would you not, by your pretty tittle tattle

6 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS,

stories, Mr. Elder brother of mine, (for, thank heav'n, so you are by one twenty years, to tell you plainly, tho' it's not worth while to speak on't:) would you not, I say, in these things persuade me into the fashions of your young coxcombs? Oblige me to wear those little hats, which let their weak brains evaporate, and those powder'd wigs, the vast bushiness whereof obscures the figure of an human countenance? Those short jerkins but just below the arms, and those large bands hanging down even to the navel? Those sleeves, which one sees dip in the sauce at table, and those petticoats called breeches? Those pretty shoes bedeck'd with ribbons, that make you look like rough-footed pigeons, and those large rollers, where, as in the stocks, the captive legs every morning are confin'd, and which make these accomplish'd gentlemen walk straddling as if they were flying?--- I should delight you, without doubt, equipped in this manner; for you, I perceive, carry about you the same geugaws that they do.

Aristo. One shou'd always comply with the majority, and never make one's self be stared at. Either extreme is offensive; and every wise man in his clothes as well as his words, shou'd have nothing too much affected, but with readiness follow whatever change custom introduces. I do not think one should imitate those one sees continually straining beyond the fashion, who are so fond of being in extremes, they would be uneasy should any body go a step beyond them. But I hold it wrong, upon one's single opinion, to avoid obstinately what all the world pursues, and think it's better to be amongst the number of fools, than find one's self the only one on wisdom's side in opposition to every body else.

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 7

Sganarel. Thus thinks an old fellow, who to impose upon the world conceals his grey hairs under a black periwig.

Aristo. It's a strange thing you always take such care to fling my age in my teeth, and that I must constantly find you blaming decency in me as well as chearfulness: as if old-age was condemned to give up all enjoyment, and ought to think of nothing else but dying: or, was not attended by enough that's disagreeable, without being also crabbed and slovenly.

Sganarel. Be it as it will, I'm resolutely determin'd to alter nothing of my dress. In spite of the fashion, I'll have a brim to my hat, under which my head may find a convenient shelter; a large long doublet, button'd close as it ought to be, that it may keep the stomach warm to digest well; a pair of breeches made exactly to fit my thighs, and shoes wherein my feet may not be tortur'd; such as our fore-fathers wisely wore.----And whoever does not like me, need only shut his eyes.

SCENE II.

LEONORA, ISABELLA, LISETTA, ARISTO and SGANAREL whispering together at the further part of the Stage, without being seen.

LEONORA to Isabella.

I TAKE it all on me, in case you should be chid.

Lisetta to Isabella.] What, for ever in a chamber without seeing any body?

Isabella. Such is his humour.

Leonora. I pity you for it, sister.

8 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

Lisetta to Leonora.] It's well for you, madam, that his brother is quite of another temper; and fate was very kind to you in making you fall into the hands of a man of reason.

Isabella. It's even a miracle, that he has not lock'd me up, or taken me out with him to day.

Lisetta. Faith I should send him to the devil with his ruff, and——

Sganarel being run against by Lisetta.] By your favour, whither are you going?

Leonora. We don't yet know; I was persuading my sister to walk out and enjoy the sweetness of this fine weather. But——

Sganarel to Leonora.] For your part, you may go whither you think proper; [pointing to Lisetta.] you have nothing to do but ramble, both of you together; [to Isabella.] but as for you, madam, if you please, I forbid your going.

Aristo. Ah! brother, let's give 'em leave to go and divert themselves.

Sganarel. I'm your servant, brother.

Aristo. Youth would——

Sganarel. Youth is foolish, and old-age too sometimes.

Aristo. D'ye imagine there's any harm in her being with Leonora?

Sganarel. No, but I think it still better for her to be with me.

Aristo. But——

Sganarel. But her actions must be under my direction: in short, I know it's my interest to take care of them.

Aristo. Am I less concern'd in those of her sister?

Sganarel. Lack-a-day, every one judges and acts as

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 9

he pleases. They have no relations, and our friend their father, at his last hour, committed the care of them to us, injoining both of us either to marry them our selves, or (should we refuse that,) to dispose of them at a proper age to others; by this contract, he meant to give us over them, from their childhood, the full authority both of father and husband. *That* you took the trouble of bringing up, and I charg'd myself with the care of *this*: you govern yours according to your own will, and, pray, give me leave to manage mine as I like best.

Aristo. Methinks——

Sganarel. Methinks, and I speak it aloud, that this is talking as I ought upon such a subject. You permit yours to flaunt about fine and taudry:—with all my heart. Let her have both a footman and a waiting-woman—I agree to't. Let her gad abroad, love idleness, and be at liberty for the beaux to compliment;—I'm well contented with it;—but I'm resolv'd, mine shall live according to my fancy, and not her own; that she shall be clothed in a decent stuff, and wear black only on holydays; that staying at home, like a discreet person, she shall apply herself intirely to affairs of housewifry, darn my linen at her leisure hours, or else knit stockings for her diversion; that she shall not listen to the discourse of coxcombs, nor ever stir abroad without somebody to watch her. In a word, the flesh is weak, I know what stories are told to that purpose, nor will I wear horns if I can help it; and since 'tis her fortune to marry me, I'm resolved to be as secure of her person as of my own.

Isabella, You have no reason, I believe—

Sganarel. Hold your tongue; I'll make you know whether you are to go abroad without me.

Leonora. What then, Sir,

Sganarel. Lord, madam, no words; I don't talk to you, for you are over-wise.

Leonora. Are you disturb'd to find Isabella with us?

Sganarel. Why yes, to say the truth, you spoil her for me. Your visits here do nothing but displease me, and you'll oblige me if you'll make no more of 'em,

Leonora. Shall I likewise declare to you my real thoughts? I can't tell how she takes all this; but I'm sensible what effect suspicion would have on me: and tho' one mother bore us, we hardly can be sisters, if your constant behaviour produces any love in her.

Lisetta. Really, all these cautions are scandalous: are we in Turkey that women must be lock'd up? For we are told they are kept like slaves there, and that 'tis for that those people are accurs'd of heaven. Our honour, Sir, is weak indeed, if there's need of watching it continually: d'ye fancy, after all, that these precautions are any hindrance to our intentions? and when we've taken any thing in our head, that the cunning'st man is not an ass? All this vigilance is but a fool's dream; o' my faith, the surest way is to confide in us. He that confines us, brings himself into extreme danger; and our honour is always for guarding itself. It inspires us, as it were, with a desire of sinning, when so much care is taken to hinder us from it; and, should I find myself restrain'd by an husband, I should have an exceeding strong inclination to realize his apprehensions.

Sganarel to Aristo.] This is your way of education, good Mr. Teacher; and you can bear it without any emotion.

Aristo. Her discourse, brother, should only make one laugh; tho' there's some reason in what she says. Their sex loves to enjoy a little liberty, and they are kept from any thing very indifferently by so much austerity; distrustful cares, bolts and grates, make neither wives nor maidens virtuous: it is honour, not severity, must keep them to their duty. To speak sincerely, a woman who is discreet by force only, is a very strange thing. We pretend in vain to govern all their actions; it's the heart that must be gain'd, in my opinion; and take what care one can, I should not think my honour mighty safe in the hands of a person, to whom, amongst the assaults of temptation, nothing should be wanting but an opportunity of transgressing.

Sganarel. It's all idle stuff.

Aristo. So let it be then; but I always hold, that we should instruct youth with good-humour, reprove its failings with great gentleness, and not make it afraid of the name of virtue. My cares for Leonora have been guided by these maxims; I've not made crimes of little liberties; I've continually comply'd with her youthful desires; and, thank heaven, I don't repent of it. I've given her leave to see good company, diversions, plays and balls; these are things, which, for my part, I always judge very proper to form the minds of young people; and the world is a school, which, in my opinion, teaches the way of living better than any book. She likes to spend money in clothes, linen, and new fashions;---what would you have me do? I endeavour to gratify her wishes; and these are pleasures one should allow young women when one's circumstances can afford it. The command of a father obliges her to marry me; but I don't intend to tyrannize over her. I know

12 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

well enough that our years don't well suit, and leave her to her own choice intirely. If a thousand pounds a year well paid, a great deal of tenderness, and a complaisant regard, can in her opinion make amends in such a match for the difference between us as to age, she may take me for her husband; if not, let her chuse elsewhere. — If she can be happier without me, I consent to it, and had rather see her married to another, than give her hand to me against her will.

Sganarel. How sweet he is! 'tis all sugar, all honey.

Aristo. In short, it's my humour, and I thank heaven for it; I shall never follow those rigid maxims, which make children with their parents dead.

Sganarel. But the liberty that's taken in youth cannot easily be abridg'd, and this way of thinking will be disagreeable to you, when her manner of living must be alter'd.

Aristo. And wherefore must it be alter'd?

Sganarel. Wherefore?

Aristo. Ay.

Sganarel. I don't know.

Aristo. Is there any thing in it to prejudice one's honour?

Sganarel. What? if you marry her, shall she pretend to the same liberties which she took while she was a maid?

Aristo. Why not?

Sganarel. Will your love be so complaisant as to allow her patches and ribbons?

Aristo. Without doubt.

Sganarel. To let her run about like a mad creature to every ball and assembly?

Aristo. Yes, really.

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 13

Sganarel. And shall the beaux come to your house?

Aristo. And what then?

Sganarel. To make merry, and give entertainments?

Aristo. I consent to't.

Sganarel. And shall your wife hear their fine speeches?

Aristo. Ay.

Sganarel. And you'll behold these coxcombs visits in such a manner, as may shew you are under no concern about them?

Aristo. Certainly.

Sganarel. Go, you're an old fool. — [to Isabella.] Get you in, that you mayn't hear this infamous conduct.

S C E N E III.

ARISTO, SGANAREL, LEONORA,
LISSETTA.

ARISTO.

I'LL commit myself to the fidelity of my wife, and intend always to live as I have done.

Sganarel. How glad shall I be when he's a cuckold!

Aristo. I can't tell to what fortune I am born; but I know, that for your part, if you fail to be one, the fault must not be laid on you, for you have taken all the pains that can be towards it.

Sganarel. Laugh on, Giggler; O what a pleasure it must give one to see a buffoon of almost sixty!

Leonora. I engage to preserve him from the fate you

14 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

talk of, if I marry him; he may assure himself of it : but know that my heart would answer for nothing, was I to be your wife.

Lifetta. There's a conscience due to those that place a confidence in us; but it's delightful, really, to cheat such folks as you.

Sganarel. Be gone with your damn'd ill-bred tongue.

Aristo. You bring this ridicule on yourself, brother. Adieu, alter your temper, and be forwarn'd, that locking up a wife is a very wrong step. — Your servant.

Sganarel. I'm not yours.

S C E N E IV.

S G A N A R E L alone.

O HOW excellently they're all suited one to another! what a hopeful family; a senseless old fellow that acts the fop in a crazy worn-out carcase, a girl that's mistress, the arrantest coquette that can be, and impudent servants! ——— No, not even wisdom herself could bring it about, she would lose all sense and reason to endeavour the regulation of such a family. ——— Isabella may lose those principles of honour she has imbib'd with me amongst such acquaintance; and, in order to prevent it, I intend shortly to send her back again to my cabbages and my turkies.

SCENE V.

VALERE, SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

VALERE at the further part of the stage.

THERE'S the Argus that I abhor, Ergaste; the rigid guardian of her I adore.

Sganarel thinking himself alone.] Is not the corruption of manners now-a-days a thing that's in short surprising?

Valere. I'll speak to him, if I can, and endeavour to get acquainted with him.

Sganarel. Instead of seeing that severity prevail, of which in former times virtue so properly consisted, the young people hereabouts, debauch'd, without restraint, don't take——

Valere. He don't see 'tis him we bow to.

Ergaste. His blind eye is on this side perhaps;—let's get to the right side of him.

Sganarel. I must leave this place.—— A city life can only produce in me the——

Valere approaching him.] I must try to gain admittance to his house.

Sganarel hearing a noise.] How! I thought some body spake—in the country, heaven be prais'd, these fashionable fooleries don't offend my eyes.

Ergaste to Valere.] Go up to him.

Sganarel still hearing a noise.] What wou'd he be at? my ears tingle.—There, all the amusements of our young women go no further than——[seeing Valere bow.] Is that to me?

16 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

Ergaste. Go nearer.

Sganarel not minding Valere.] Thither no coxcomb comes. ——— [Valere bows again.] What the devil! ——— [Turns and sees Ergaste bow on the other side.] Again? ——— What mean these bows!

Valere. Accosting you in this manner, Sir, interrupts you perhaps.

Sganarel. May be so.

Valere. But why so? the honour of your acquaintance is to me so great an happiness, so exquisite a pleasure, that I had a vast inclination to pay my respects to you.

Sganarel. Be it so.

Valere. To wait on you, and assure you, without any dissimulation, that I'm intirely at your service.

Sganarel. I believe so.

Valere. I've the good luck to be one of your neighbours, for which I am thankful to my happy destiny.

Sganarel. That's well done.

Valere. But Sir, d'ye hear the news which is current at court, and thought to be true?

Sganarel. What does it concern me?

Valere. True; however a man, sometimes, may be curious after novelties. Will you go see the magnificent preparations for the birth of our Dauphin, Sir?

Sganarel. If I think fit.

Valere. Paris, we own, affords us an hundred delightful pleasures which are no where else. The Country is a solitude in comparison. How do you pass away the time?

Sganarel. About my business

Valere. The mind should have some relaxation; it

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 17

flags by too earnest an attention to serious things. What d'ye do in an evening before bed-time?

Sganarel. What I please.

Valere. Certainly; nothing could be said better; it's a reasonable answer, and good sense appears in never doing any thing but what one pleases. If I thought you was not too much taken up, I should come to your house now and then after supper, to pass away the time.

Sganarel. Your servant.

SCENE VI.

VALERE, ERGASTE,

VALERE.

WHAT'S your opinion of this whimsical fool?

Ergaste. He has a surly way of answering, and receives people like a bear.

Valere. Ah! how mad I am!

Ergaste. At what?

Valere. At what? — It provokes me to see her I love in the power of a-savage, a watchful dragon, whose severity won't allow her any liberty.

Ergaste. That makes for you, and on the effect of it your passion must build its surest hopes. Know, for your encouragement, a woman that's watch'd is half won, and the peevishness of fathers and husbands has always forwarded the business of lovers. I intrigue very little, it is my least accomplishment, and I don't pretend to galantry: but I've assisted twenty of your sportsmen, who often said, they were best pleas'd to

meet with those churlish husbands, that never come home without grumbling, those arrant brutes, that without thought or reason condemn the conduct of their wives in every thing, and haughtily assuming upon the name of husband, fall out with them for nothing in the company of their admirers. — One knows, say they, to make the best of these advantages; and the lady's indignation at such kind of usage, the soft complaining, the obliging condolence of the lover upon the occasion, afford an opportunity to push things far enough. In a word, the surliness of Isabella's keeper is a circumstance sufficiently favourable for you.

Valere. But for the four months that I have lov'd her passionately, I could never find one moment to converse with her.

Ergaste. Love quickens people's wits; tho' it has little effect on yours: If I had been — —

Valere. Why, what could you have done? when she's never to be seen without that brute, and there are neither maids nor footmen in the house whom I might influence to assist my passion by the flattering temptation of a reward.

Ergaste. Don't she yet know then that you love her?

Valere. That's a matter which my heart's not yet inform'd of; where-ever that churl has carry'd the fair one, she has seen me continually after her like a shadow, and my looks have endeavour'd day by day to declare to her the violence of my passion. My eyes have spoke loudly to her; but who can inform me whether they could make their language be understood?

Ergaste. That language, 'tis true, may sometimes

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 19

prove unintelligible, if it has neither writing nor speech for its interpreter.

Valere. What shall I do to get out of this extreme uneasiness, and learn if the fair one understands I love her? — Tell me some way.

Ergaste. That's what must be contriv'd. Let's go into your house a little, that we may consider on't better.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

GO, I know the house and person by the marks alone that you give me.

Isabella aside.] O heaven! be propitious to me, and favour, at this time, the artful contrivance of an innocent passion!

Sganarel. Don't you say you was told that he is call'd Valere?

Isabella. Yes.

Sganarel. Go, be easy: get you in, and leave me to do't. I'll go talk immediately to this young rattle.

Isabella going.] I'm about a very daring project for a young girl; but the unjust rigor wherewith I am treated, will be my excuse with every confederate person.

SCENE II.

SGANAREL alone, knocking at the door, thinking it's Valere's.

LET'S lose no time: this is the place. — Who goes there? — Well, I'm thinking. — Soho, I say, soho, somebody, soho. I don't wonder, after this discovery, that he came thither just now in so complaisant a manner; but I'll be expeditious, and his foolish hope —

SCENE III.

VALERE, SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

SGANAREL to Ergaste, who comes out hastily.

A PLAGUE on the lubberly ass, who plants himself like a stake directly before me, in order to fling me down.

Valere. Sir, I'm concern'd —

Sganarel. Ah! 'tis you I look for.

Valere. Me, Sir?

Sganarel. You: isn't your name Valere?

Valere. Yes.

Sganarel. I come to talk with you, if you think fit.

Valere. Can I be so happy as to do you any service?

Sganarel. No, but I myself intend to do a good turn for you; and that's what brings me to your house.

Valere. To my house, Sir?

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 11

Sganarel. To your house ; need you be so astonish'd at that ?

Valere. I have no reason to be so, and my soul is transported at the honour——

Sganarel. Let's ha' done with that honour, I pray you.

Valere. Won't you walk in?

Sganarel. There's no occasion for it.

Valere. Sir, pray now.

Sganarel. No ; I'll not go a step farther.

Valere. Whilst you stay here, I cannot hear you.

Sganarel. I won't stir.

Valere. Well, I must submit:—— Since the gentleman is resolv'd upon't, bring a chair hither, quickly.

Sganarel. I'll talk standing.

Valere. Can I suffer you in this manner!

Sganarel. Oh! it's a terrible force upon you!

Valere. Such rudeness would be too inexcusable.

Sganarel. Nothing can be so rude as not to hear people that would' speak to us.

Valere. I obey you then.

Sganarel. You can't do better. [They use abundance of compliments about putting on their hats.] There is little need of so much ceremony.—— Will you hear me?

Valere. Without doubt, and very gladly.

Sganarel. Answer me then ;—Do you know that I am the guardian of a young woman, tolerably handsome, who lodges in this neighbourhood, and is call'd Isabella?

Valere. Yes,

Sganarel. If you know it, I need not inform you—

22 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

but do you know likewise, that being sensible of her charms, I'm concern'd for her in another manner than as a guardian, and that she is destin'd to the honour of my bed?

Valere. No.

Sganarel. Then I inform you of that; and, that it's very fit you should not disturb her with your passion.

Valere. Who I, Sir?

Sganarel. Ay, you:—Let's have no dissembling.

Valere. Who told you that I had a passion for her?

Sganarel. People that one may give some credit to.

Valere. But who, pray?

Sganarel. She herself.

Valere. She!

Sganarel. Ay, she: Is that saying enough?—Like an honest girl, that has lov'd me from her childhood, she told me all, just now; and more than that, charged me to let you know, that since she has been follow'd every where by you, her heart, which your pursuit exceedingly offends, has understood but too well the language of your eyes; that your secret wishes are discover'd to her sufficiently; and that it's giving your self a needless trouble to endeavour at explaining a passion farther, which is contrary to that affection she reserves for me.

Valere. Is it she, d'ye say, that from herself made you——

Sganarel. Ay,—come to give you this frank and true account; and that having observ'd the violent love which disturbs your mind, she would sooner have let you know her thoughts, if, under such emotion of soul, she could have found any body to send this message by; but that, at last, the vexation of being under a strict

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 33

confinement, brought her to make use of me, to apprise you, as I have told you, that her affection must not be granted to any body else but me; that you have ogl'd her long enough, and that, if you have ever so little understanding, you will take some other measures. — Farewel, till I see you again — this is what I had to inform you of.

Valere low.] What say you to this adventure, Ergaste?

Sganarel low aside.] He's much surpris'd.

Ergaste low to Valere.] 'Tis my opinion, there's nothing in it to displease you, but that some subtle mystery is conceal'd under it: and in short, that this message does not come from one who would destroy the love she inspires in you.

Sganarel aside.] He takes it right.

Valere low to Ergaste.] You judge it to be mysterious.

Ergaste low.] Yes — but he observes us, let us get out of his sight.

S C E N E IV.

S G A N A R E L alone.

HOW his confusion is visible in his countenance! he look'd for no such message, to be sure. — Let's call Isabella; she shews what effect education has upon the mind. Virtue is all she cares for, and her heart is so intirely full on't, that the very looks of a man displease her.

SCENE V.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

ISABELLA to herself entering.

I'M afraid my lover is so full of his passion, that he does not comprehend the intention of my message ; and since I'm such a prisoner, I'll run the risk of another that may speak my meaning plainer.

Sganarel. Here I'm come back.

Isabella. Well.

Sganarel. Your message has had its full effect ; your man's business is done. He would have deny'd that his heart was sick with love, but when I assur'd him I came from you, he was struck immediately dumb and confounded, and I don't believe he'll come any more hither.

Isabella. Ha ! what is it you tell me ? I very much apprehend the contrary, and that he's again cutting out more work for us.

Sganarel. What reason have you for this apprehension ?

Isabella. You was hardly got out of doors, when, putting my head out at window to take the air, I saw a young fellow at yonder turning, who came very surprisingly, to wish me a good morning from that impertinent fellow, and flung a box directly into my chamber, in which was a letter sealed like a Billet-doux. — I would instantly have thrown it back to him, but he was got to the end of the street, and my heart swells with vexation at it.

Sganarel. Observe a little the cunning, the knavery !

Isabella.

Isabella. It's my duty to send back immediately the box and letter to this cursed lover, and I shall want somebody for that purpose, for to make bold with you——

Sganarel. On the contrary, Dearee, it convinces me the better of your affection and fidelity; my heart accepts the office with joy, and you oblige me by it more than I am able to express.

Isabella. Take it then.

Sganarel. Well, let's see what he could write to you.

Isabella. O heavens! take care not to open it.

Sganarel. Why so?

Isabella. Would you give him reason to believe 'twas I?—A woman of honour ought always to avoid reading the letters a man sends her; the curiosity one then discovers, shews a secret pleasure in hearing one's self commended; and I think it proper this letter should immediately be carried to him, seal'd up as it is, that he may so much the better learn how greatly my heart despises him; that his passion may lose all kind of hope henceforward, and no more attempt the like extravagance.

Sganarel. She has certainly reason for what she says.——Well, your virtue and discretion charm me. I perceive that my instructions are rooted in your soul: and in short, you shew that you deserve to be my wife.

Isabella. I would not, however, balk your curiosity: you have got the letter, and you may open it.

Sganarel. Lack-a-day, I don't care;—no, your reasons are too good for that, and I am just going to discharge the trust you put in me; afterwards, I shall

16 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

step a little way to speak a word or two, and then come back to make you easy.

SCENE VI.

SGANAREL alone.

HOW my soul overflows with joy to find her such a prudent girl! She's a treasure of honour in my family! to take the glances of love for treason, receive a billet-doux as a very great injury, and send it back again to her gallant by me! I'd fain know, whether upon such an occasion my brother's damsel would have acted thus. Faith, girls are just what they are taught to be——So-ho.

[Knocking at Valere's door.

SCENE VII.

SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

ERGASTE.

WHO'S there?

Sganarel. Take this; and tell your master that he must not any more impertinently presume to write letters and send them with golden boxes, and that Isabella is violently enraged about it. See, she has not so much as opened it. He'll find the regard she has for his passion, and what happy success he ought to hope from it.

SCENE VIII.

VALERE, ERGASTE.

VALERE.

WHAT has that surly brute been giving you?

Ergaste. This letter, Sir, which, with this box, he pretends that Isabella receiv'd from you, and about which, he says, she's in a very great fury. It's without opening that she returns it you: read it quickly, and let's see if I'm mistaken.

Valere reads.] " This letter will no doubt surprise
 " you: and both the design of writing and the manner
 " of getting it to you, may be thought very rash in me:
 " but I find myself in a situation not to observe forms
 " any longer. The just dread of a marriage where-
 " with I am threaten'd in six days, makes me run all
 " risques: and being resolv'd to free myself by some
 " means or other, I believed, that I ought rather to
 " choose you than despair. However, don't imagine,
 " that you are wholly oblig'd to my evil destiny: it is
 " not the constraint I am under that gives birth to the
 " sentiments I have for you; but it's that which hastens
 " the discovery of them, and makes me pass over those
 " formalities which the decency of my sex requires. It
 " depends on yourself alone to have me speedily yours,
 " and I wait you till you shew me what your love
 " designs, before I let you know the resolution I
 " have taken: but above all, remember that time is
 " pressing, and that two hearts in love should under-
 " stand each other by half a word."

28 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

Ergaste. Well, Sir, is not this contrivance an original? For a young creature, her understanding in this affair is not amiss. Would one believe her capable of these love stratagems?

Valere. Ah! I find her perfectly adorable! This stroke of her wit and friendship even doubles my passion for her; and adds to the sentiments wherewith her beauty inspires me.

Ergaste. The bubble's coming; consider what you must say to him.

S C E N E IX.

SGANAREL, VALERE, ERGASTE.

SGANAREL thinking himself alone.

O THRICE, and four time blest be this edict which forbids extravagance in dress! The uneasiness of husbands will be no more so grievous, and wives will now be limited in their demands. Oh! how I'm obliged to the king for this decree! And, for the satisfaction of the said husbands, how I wish that coquetry was forbidden as well as laces and embroidery. I have bought the edict on purpose for Isabella to read to me; and that, for want of other employment, shall be our diversion by and by after supper. [seeing Valere.] Will you send love-letters with golden boxes again, Mr. Foppington? You surely thought to find some young coquette, fond of intrigues, and easily melted down by flattery; but you see with what an air your presents are received; and take my word for't, it is spending your powder to kill sparrows. She's discreet; she loves me; and she's

affronted at your passion? away, bag and baggage, therefore, and form your designs elsewhere.

Valere. Ay, indeed, Sir, your merit, to which every body yields, is too powerful an obstacle to my addresses; and it is foolishness in me sincere as my passion is, to contend with you for Isabella's love.

Sganarel. It is true, 'tis a folly.

Valere. Nor should I have devoted my heart to the pursuit of her beauty, could I have foreseen that this wretched heart should find a rival so formidable as you.

Sganarel. I believe it.

Valere. Now I have no room for hope:—to you, Sir, I give place, and that too without murmuring.

Sganarel. You do well.

Valere. Reason will have it so; for so much virtue shines in you, that I should be in the wrong to behold with an angry eye the tender sentiments Isabella has for you.

Sganarel. That's to be suppos'd.

Valere. Yes, yes, I give place to you. But, Sir, I beseech you, (and it's the only favour a miserable lover begs, whose present torment you alone occasion:) I conjure you then, to assure Isabella, that if for three months past my soul has lov'd her, its passion has been pure and spotless, and never had a thought which her honour could reasonably be displeased at.

Sganarel. Ay.

Valere. That having nothing but my own inclinations to gratify, all my designs were to obtain her for a wife, if, in you, who captivate her heart, fate had not oppos'd an obstacle to this just passion.

Sganarel. Mighty well.

Valere. That, happen what will, she must not i-

30 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

Imagine I can e'er forget her charms; that in what manner soever I must submit to the decrees of heaven, I'm destin'd to love her even to my latest gasp; and that, if any thing stifles my addresses, it is the just regard I have for your merit.

Sganarel. That's wisely said, and I'm going to inform her of this discourse, which won't be disagreeable; but if you'll trust to me, endeavour earnestly to drive this passion out of your head. ——— Farewel.

Ergasfe. Excellent bubble!

SCENE X.

SGANAREL alone.

I'M very sorry for this poor good-natur'd wretch; but 'twas unhappy for him to think of taking a fort that I had conquer'd.

[Sganarel knocks at his door.

SCENE XI.

SGANAREL, ISABELLA.

SGANAREL.

NEVER lover discover'd such uneasiness at a letter sent back unopen'd: his hopes, in short, are quite destroyed, and he's withdrawn: but he earnestly conjured me to acquaint you, that in loving you, his passion has been pure and spotless, and never had a thought which your honour could reasonably be displeased at; and that having only his own inclinations to gratify, all his de-

fires were to obtain you for a wife, if, in me who captivate your heart, fate had not oppos'd an obstacle to his sincere passion; that, let what will befall, you must not imagine your charms can ever be forgotten by him; that whatsoever decrees of heaven he must submit to, he is destin'd to love you even to the latest gasp: and that, if any thing stifles his addresses, it is the just regard he has for my merit. These are his own words, and so far from blaming him, I think him an honest fellow, and pity him for loving you.

Isabella softly.] I am not mistaken in my belief of his passion; his looks assured me always of its innocence.

Sganarel. What d'ye say?

Isabella. That it's unkind to me to pity a man so much whom I hate to death; and that if you loved me, as you say you do, you'd be sensible how I'm affronted by his addresses.

Sganarel. But he didn't know your mind; and for the honesty of his intention, his love does not deserve ———

Isabella. Is it a good intention, pray now, to think to run away with people? Is it like a man of honour to form designs of taking me from you, and marrying me by force, as if I was a creature that could bear life after such infamy being thrown upon me?

Sganarel. How?

Isabella. Yes, really, this base lover, I understand, talks of running away with me; but I can't imagine, for my part, by what secret means he learn'd so soon that you design'd to marry me at farthest in eight days, since it was but yesterday you told me so; but, it's report-

ed, he'll prevent that day which should unite your fate and mine.

Sganarel. That signifies nothing.

Isabella. O! pardon me; he's a very honest man, and does not retain for me——

Sganarel. He's in the wrong, and this is carrying the jest too far.

Isabella. Come, your mildness encourages his folly. If, just now, he had found you talk roundly to him, he would have dreaded your rage and my resentment, for it is even since his letter was rejected, that he spoke of this scandalous design; and, as far as I perceive, his passion makes him still imagine that my heart approves of him, that I avoid marrying you, whatever the world may think of it, and that I should with joy find myself out of your clutches.

Sganarel. He's a fool.

Isabella. Before you he knows how to disguise himself, and his intention is to amuse you: But be certain the traitor imposes upon you with his fair speeches. I am very unhappy, I'm sure, that notwithstanding all my endeavours to live with honour, and repulse the addresses of a vile seducer, I must be exposed to the vexation of his infamous attempts upon me.

Sganarel. Well, don't fear any thing.

Isabella. For my part, I assure you, that unless you shew your self exceeding angry at so impudent an attempt, and quickly find out some way to free me from the persecutions of such a rash creature, I'll give up every thing, and not endure the affronts which I receive from him.

Sganarel. Come, don't afflict thy self so much, my Dearee; I'll go find him out and sing him such a tune.

Isabella. However, tell him, that denying it is to no purpose, for I was informed of his design by a good hand; and that after this notice, I dare defy him to surprise me, whatever he may attempt. In short, that without farther loss of time and trouble, he may be sensible what my sentiments are towards you, and that, if he would avoid making mischief, he mustn't want being told the same thing twice.

Sganarel. I'll tell him what's proper.

Isabella. But do it in a tone that may shew him it really comes from my very soul.

Sganarel. Well, I'll forget nothing, I warrant ye.

Isabella. I'm impatient for your return: pray make all the haste you can. I languish if you're from my sight one moment.

Sganarel. Go, my heart's delight, I'll be back instantly.

SCENE XII.

SGANAREL alone.

IS there a better or disrepute person? — Ah! how happy I am, and what a joy it is to find a wife according to my own wish! Ay, thus wives ought to be, and not like some I know, downright coquettes, that suffer themselves to be courted, and make their honest husbands be pointed at thro' all Paris. [Knocking at Valere's door.] Soho, there, where's this fine enterprising spark of ours?

B 5

SCENE XIII.

VALERE, SGANAREL, ERGASTE.

VALERE.

SIR, what brings you here again?

Sganarel. Your follies.

Valere. How?

Sganarel. You very well know what I want to talk about. To tell you plainly, I took you to have more sense. You came to amuse me with your fine speeches, and secretly retain your own foolish hopes. I was inclinable, d'ye see, to use you gently, but at last you'll force me into a passion. Are you not ashamed, considering who you are, to contrive in your mind such projects as you do, to intend running away with a woman of honour, and interrupting a marriage which her whole happiness depends on?

Valere. Who told you this wonderful news, Sir?

Sganarel. No dissembling: I have it from Isabella; who, for the last time, sends you word by me, that she has plainly enough discover'd to you whom she chuses; that her heart, which is intirely mine, is enrag'd at such a contrivance; that she'd rather die than suffer such an insult; and that you'll occasion terrible doings, unless you put an end to all this uneasiness.

Valere. If she really said what you inform me, I own my passion can pretend to nothing farther: These expressions are clear enough to let me see all is over, and I must revere the sentence she has passed.

Sganarel. If? D'ye make a doubt on't then, and

fancy all the complaints I've brought from her to you are mere pretences? Will you have her tell you her own mind? To set you right, I willingly consent to't. Follow me, you shall see if I have added any thing, and if her youthful heart is in suspense between us.

[Going to knock at his own door.

SCENE XIV.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL. VALERE,
ERGASTE.

ISABELLA.

HOW? D'ye bring him to me? What is't you mean? D'ye take his part against me? And, charm'd with his rare qualities, will you force me to love him, and endure his visits?

Sganarel. No, hony, I set too great a value on your heart for that; but he imagines what I told him to be an errant fiction, he believes 'tis from myself I speak, and that I cunningly represent you full of hate towards him, and tenderness for me; wherefore, from your own mouth I would cure him infallibly of a mistake which encourages his passion.

Isabella. What, does not my soul fully declare its meaning to you, and can you still be doubtful whom I love?

Valere. Indeed, madam, whatever the gentleman said to me from you might well surprise me. I was in doubt, I own, and that final sentence which determines the fate of my unbounded passion, must be so sensibly

felt by me, that it can be no offence if I desire the repetition of it.

Isabella. No, no; you must not wonder at such a sentence; he told you my very thoughts, and I conceive them founded on reason sufficient to prove how sincere they are. Yes indeed, I'd have it known, and I ought to be credited, that fate here presents two objects to my view, which inspiring me with different sentiments, agitate all the passions of my soul. One, by a reasonable choice, whereto honour engages me, possesses all my esteem and love; and the other, in return for his affection, has all my anger and my aversion. The one's presence is agreeable and dear to me, and fills my soul with joy; but the sight of t'other inspires my heart with secret emotions both of hatred and horror. To see myself the wife of one is all my desire, and I had rather lose my life than be marry'd to the other. But 'tis sufficient that I declare my real sentiments, and languish too long under these cruel torments; the person I love must now exert his diligence to destroy entirely the hopes of him I hate, and deliver me by a happy marriage from a punishment I dread much more than death.

Sganarel. Ay, my Dearee, I intend to satisfy thy wish.

Isabella. It's the only way to make me easy.

Sganarel. You shall be so shortly.

Isabella. I know 'tis indecent for young women to declare their love so freely.

Sganarel. No, no.

Isabella. But in the condition fate has placed me, these liberties may be allowed; and I can, without a

Hush, make this tender acknowledgement to him whom I already consider as my husband.

Sganarel. Ay, my poor dear child, my soul's delight.

Isabella. Then pray let him think of proving his passion for me.

Sganarel. Ay, there, kiss my hand.

Isabella. Without farther courtship, let him conclude a marriage, which I heartily desire; and accept the assurance I now give him that I'll never hearken to the vows of any other person.

[She pretends to embrace Sganarel, and gives her hand to Valere to kiss.

Sganarel. Ha, ha, my pretty-face, my poor dear hony: you shall not pine very long, I promise you. Go, say no more. [To Valere.] You see I don't make her speak; she's fond of none but me.

Valere. Well, madam, very well, your meaning is plain enough: I learn by this discourse what it is you urge me to; and ere long I shall be able to remove from your presence him who gives you this great disturbance.

Isabella. You can't oblige me more agreeably, for, in short, the sight of him is grievous to endure; 'tis hateful to me, and the horror is so great——

Sganarel. So so.

Isabella. Does my talking thus displease you? Do I——

Sganarel. Alas, by no means, I don't say that; but, without lying, I'm sorry for his condition, and your aversion shews itself too violently.

Isabella. I can't shew it too much on such an occasion.

28 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

Valere. Well: you shall be satisfy'd; and after three days never more shall your eyes behold the hated object.

Isabella. Heaven grant it! adieu.

Sganarel. I pity your misfortune: but ——

Valere. Nay, you shall hear no complaint at all from me; the lady certainly does justice to us both, and I'll endeavour to satisfy her wishes. —— Adieu.

Sganarel. Poor young fellow! his affliction is excessive. Come, embrace me, for I'm your second self.

SCENE XV.

ISABELLA, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

I THINK he's greatly to be pity'd.

Isabella. Pho, not at all.

Sganarel. As for the rest, Dearee, your love touches me to the last degree, and I'm desirous it should be rewarded. Eight days are too long to stay considering your impatience; I'll marry you to morrow, and won't invite ——

Isabella. To morrow?

Sganarel. You pretend reluctance out of modesty, but I know what joy my saying so gives you, and you wish it was already done.

Isabella. But ——

Sganarel. Let's go get all things ready for this wedding.

Isabella aside.] O heaven assist me how to hinder it!

ACT III. SCENE I.

ISABELLA.

YES, death, methinks, is an hundred times less dreadful than this fatal marriage, whereto I'm forc'd; and whatsoe'er I do to avoid the terrors of it, ought to find some favour with those that censure me. Time presses: It's night: let me go with courage, and commit my fortune to a lover's fidelity.

SCENE II.

SGANAREL, ISABELLA.

SGANAREL speaking to the people in the house.

I'M return'd, and to morrow I'll send——

Isabella. O heav'n!

Sganarel. Is it you, Dearee? Whither d'ye go so late? You told me when I left you, that being a little weary you'd shut yourself in your chamber: nay, you desir'd that at my coming back I'd let you be at quiet till to morrow morning.

Isabella. It's true; but——

Sganarel. But what?

Isabella I'm in confusion you see, nor know I how to excuse it to you.

Sganarel. How so! What can this mean?

Isabella. A wonderful secret: 'Tis my sister now obliges me to go abroad, who, with a design for which I

have blam'd her very much, desir'd my chamber of me where I have lock'd her up.

Sganarel. For what purpose?

Isabella. Could one believe it? She's in love with this spark we have discarded.

Sganarel. With Valere?

Isabella. Desperately: nothing can equal the greatness of her passion. You may judge how exceeding violent it is, by her coming hither alone at this hour to discover the anguish of her love to me, and to tell me that she certainly shall die unless she may obtain what her soul so much desires; that for above a year their amour has secretly been carry'd on with warmth and spirit; and that, at the very beginning of their fondness, they engag'd themselves to each other by a mutual promise of marriage.

Sganarel. A villain!

Isabella. That being inform'd to what despair I have driven the man whose sight she dotes on, she came to beg I'd permit her passion to prevent a separation which would pierce her soul, and give her leave to entertain the spark this evening in my name at my chamber-window that looks into the little street, where, counterfeiting my voice, she may talk a little kindly to him, and thereby tempt his stay; in short, that she may dextrously manage to her own advantage the regard he's known to have for me.

Sganarel. And d'ye think that —

Isabella. For my part, I'm provok'd at it: What, sister, said I, are you out of your wits? Are you not ashamed to be thus in love with one of these sort of people, who change every day? To forget your sex,

and deceive the hope of a man whom heaven has appointed for you?

Sganarel. He well deserves it, and I am very glad on't.

Isabella. In short, my vexation made use of an hundred reasons to reproach her for so much baseness, and enable me to refuse what she this night requested; but I found her desires so importunate, she shed so many tears, fetch'd so many sighs, and so often told me I should drive her to despair if I deny'd to gratify her passion, that, in spite of my teeth, my heart was forc'd to yield; and to justify this night's intrigue, which a tenderness for my own blood made me give way to, I was going to get Lucretia to come and lie with me, whose virtues you daily praise so much; but you surpriz'd me by this quick return.

Sganarel. No, no, I won't have all this juggling at my house; I could agree to't so far as it concerns my brother, but they may be seen by somebody in the street, and she whom I honour with my person should not only be modest and well-bred, but she must not even be suspected. Let's go turn out the shameless creature; and for her passion —

Isabella. Ah! you'll put her in too great confusion, and she may justly complain how little secrecy I'm mistress of. Since I must not countenance her design, stay here at least till I send her going.

Sganarel. Well then, do so.

Isabella. But above all things conceal your self, I beseech you, and let her go without speaking one word to her.

Sganarel. Ay, for thy sake I'll restrain my anger; but the very instant she's got without the door, I'll go

42 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

find my brother: 'Twill delight me to run and tell him this affair.

Isabella. I conjure you then not to mention my name. Good night t'ye, for I'm going to shut myself up this moment.

Sganarel. Until to-morrow, my life. [Alone.] How impatient am I to see my brother, and inform him of this accident? The good man is chous'd with all his wisdom, and I would not be without this discovery for an hundred crowns.

Isabella in the house.] Yes, sister, I'm sorry to incur your displeasure, but it's impossible for me to gratify you; my honour, which is dear to me, runs too great a risque by't; adieu; be gone before it is too late.

Sganarel. There she goes; she's a pretty kind of a plague, I warrant ye: let's lock the door, for fear she should come back again.

Isabella entring.] Oh heaven! forsake me not in my designs!

Sganarel aside.] Whither can she be going? Let's follow her a little.

Isabella aside.] The night, however, favours me in my distress.

Sganarel aside.] To the spark's lodgings! What an enterprize is this!

S C E N E III.

VALERE, ISABELLA, SGANAREL,

VALERE coming out hastily.

YES, yes, I'll try some way this very night to speak — Who's there?

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 43

Isabella. Make no noise, Valere, you are prevented, and I am Isabella.

Sganarel. You lye, you baggage, 'tis not she. She follows closely those laws of honour which you forsake, and you assume falsely both her name and voice.

Isabella. But was it not that you by holy matrimony —

Valere. Indeed, that is the only purpose of my destiny; and here I make you a solemn promise, that to-morrow I'll go where-e'er you please to perform the ceremony.

Sganarel aside.] Poor self-cozen'd fool!

Valere. Go in securely: I now defy the power of your deluded guardian; and before he shall take you from my passion this arm shall pierce his heart with a thousand strokes.

SCENE IV.

SGANAREL alone.

OH! I have no inclination, I assure you, to take from you a shameless creature enslav'd to her passion; I'm not jealous of your promise to her, and believe me, you shall be her husband. Ay, let's catch him with this impudent creature: the memory of her father, well worthy of respect, together with the great interest I have in her sister, requires my endeavours at least to preserve her honour. — Soho.

[Knocking at a commissary's door.

SCENE V.

SGANAREL, the COMMISSARY, the NOTARY,
Attendant with a Flambeau.

THE COMMISSARY.

WHO's there?

Sganarel. Your servant, Mr. Commissary; we want a cast of your office; please to follow me with your light.

The Commissary. We're going to——

Sganarel. The affair's in great haste.

The Commissary. What is't?

Sganarel. To go in there, and surprise two people together, who must be honestly married: 'tis a girl of ours whom one Valere has deceiv'd, and got into his house by promising her marriage; she comes of a noble and virtuous family, but——

The Commissary. If it's for that, our meeting is very lucky, for here's a Notary with us.

Sganarel. Sir.

Notary. Yes, Sir, a publick Notary.

The Commissary. And also a man of honour.

Sganarel. That's suppos'd without your saying so. Go in at the door, make no noise, but mind that nobody gets out: you shall be fully satisfy'd for your pains; but don't suffer yourselves to be greas'd in the fist however.

The Commissary. How? D'ye then believe that an officer of justice——

Sganarel. I don't say it as a reflection upon your

office. I'll fetch my brother hither immediately. Let the flambeau light me. [aside.] I'll go congratulate this man of patience. Soho.

[Knocking at Aristo's door.]

SCENE VI.

ARISTO, SGANAREL.

ARISTO.

WHO knocks?—Oh! Brother, what d'ye want?

Sganarel. Come along, sweet Mr. Director, I'll shew you something that's pretty, superannuated fop.

Aristo. How?

Sganarel. I bring you good news.

Aristo. What is it?

Sganarel. Where's your Leonora, pray?

Aristo. Wherefore that question? She's at a friend's house I believe, at a ball.

Sganarel. Hey! ay, ay, follow me: You shall see what kind of ball the gentlewoman's gone to.

Aristo. What d'ye mean?

Sganarel. You have brought her up mighty well. It's not right to be always finding fault; much gentleness wins the mind; and distrustful cares, bolts, and grates make neither wives nor maidens virtuous. The sex requires a little liberty, and by such severity we occasion them to do amiss. She has really taken her fill of it, a cunning baggage, and virtue with her is grown exceeding gentle.

Aristo. What's the drift of this discourse?

Sganarel. Come, Mr. Elder-brother of mine, it's

46 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS.

what you well deserve; and I would not for twenty Pistoles, but that you should have this fruit of your silly maxims. It's plain what effect our instructions have produc'd on two sisters: one flies from galants, and the other runs after them.

Aristo. Unless you make this riddle clearer to me—

Sganarel. The riddle is, that her ball is at Mr. Valere's, that I saw her go thither by night, and that at this present time she's in his arms.

Aristo. Who?

Sganarel. Leonora.

Aristo. Leave off your bantering, I beseech you.

Sganarel. Bantering! 'tis very good to hear him talk of bantering: poor soul! I tell you again and again, that Valere has got your Leonora at his house, and that they were engaged by a mutual promise before he thought of following Isabella.

Aristo. This story is so highly improbable.

Sganarel. He won't believe it, tho' he sees it. It makes me mad. Years signify nothing when folks want it here.

[Pointing to his forehead.]

Aristo. What! Brother, would you have—

Sganarel. Lack-a-day! I'd ha' nothing: only follow me, your mind shall presently be made easy. You shall see if I impose on you, and if they have not been contracted for more than a year past.

Aristo. Is it likely she should consent to this engagement without apprizing me of it! me, who always from her infancy upon every occasion have practis'd towards her a perfect complaisance, and an hundred times have protested never to force her inclinations.

Sganarel. In short, your own eyes shall judge of the matter: I've already fetch'd a Commissary and a Notary,

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 47

it's our interest that the honour she has lost should be repair'd upon the spot by marriage; for I don't imagine you'll be so mean-spirited to make her your wife with this stain upon her, unless you have some new arguments to place you above ridicule.

Aristo. I shall never be so exceeding weak to desire the possession of an heart against its will. But after all I can't believe——

Sganarel. What a talking you make! come along, this dispute would last for ever.

S C E N E VII.

The COMMISSARY, The NOTARY,
SGANAREL, ARISTO.

COMMISSARY.

HERE'S no occasion for compulsion, gentlemen. If you only wish to have 'em marry'd, you need be no more uneasy, for they both are equally inclin'd to it. And, as to what concerns you, Valere has given it under his hand already, that he designs for his wife, her who now is with him.

Aristo. The girl——

Commissary. Is lock'd up, and won't come out, unless you consent to gratify their desires.

SCENE VIII.

VALERE, The COMMISSARY, The NOTARY, SGANAREL, ARISTO.

VALERE at the window.

NO, gentlemen, nor shall any body enter here till your pleasure be known to me. You are sensible who I am, and I have done my part in signing the instrument, which they may shew you: If it's your intention to agree to the match, you must likewise set your hand to a confirmation of it; but, if not, depend upon't, you shall kill me sooner than take from me the object of my love.

Sganarel. Nay, we don't design to separate you from her. [aside.] He's not yet undeceiv'd, as to Isabella, let's take advantage of the mistake.

Aristo to Valere.] But is that Leonora?

Sganarel to Aristo.] Hold your tongue.

Aristo. But ———

Sganarel. Be quiet.

Aristo. I wou'd know ———

Sganarel. What, again? hold your tongue, I tell you.

Valere. In short, whatever be the consequence, Isabella has my solemn promise, as I have her's, and I am not a match, considering all things, which you shall be admitted to disapprove.

Aristo to Sganarel.] What he says is not ———

Sganarel. Hold your tongue: I have a reason for't: and you shall know the secret. Well, without any
more

more words, both of us consent that you shall marry her who is at present with you.

Commissary. 'Tis in those terms the thing is drawn; and there's a blank for the name, since we did not see her. — Come, set your hands; the lady will make you all friends afterwards.

Valere. I agree to't in that manner.

Sganarel. And, for my part, I like it mightily: [aside.] We shall have rare laughing by-and-by. There, sign it first, brother, that honour belongs to you.

Aristo. But what all this mystery —

Sganarel. Pox o' your impertinence! Come, sign, you Simpleton.

Aristo. He talks of Isabella, and you of Leonora.

Sganarel. Don't you consent, brother, if 'tis she, to let 'em make good their mutual promises?

Aristo. Without doubt.

Sganarel. Set your hand then, and I will do the same.

Aristo. So let it be, I comprehend nothing of the matter.

Sganarel. You shall be let into the matter.

Commissary. We'll be back again presently.

Sganarel to Aristo.] Well, now I'll tell you the subtilty of this intrigue.

[They retire to the farther part of the stage.]

SCENE IX.

LEONORA, SGANAREL, ARISTO,
LISSETTA.

LEONORA.

O! WHAT a deal of torment have I endur'd! how impertinent all these young fools appear to me! — I slip'd away from the ball upon their account.

Lisetta. They were all desirous to make themselves agreeable to you.

Leonora. For my part, I never met with any thing more unsufferable, and should prefer the meanest conversation to all the flashy speeches of these discourfers of nothing: they believe all must give place to their powder'd wigs, and fancy themselves the wittiest folks in the world, when, with a wretched bantering tone, they rally one in a stupid manner about the love of an old man: whereas I value the affection of such an old man, beyond all the giddy raptures of a youthful brain. But don't I perceive —

[Sganarel to Aristo.] Well, thus stands the affair. [seeing Leonora.] O! I see her coming, and her maid with her.

Aristo. Without being angry, Leonora, I have reason to complain: you know, I have never desir'd to lay any constraint upon you, and that I have promis'd more than an hundred times, to allow you a full liberty of gratifying your own wishes. Your heart, notwithstanding this, disregarding my approbation, has engag'd itself by promise, as well as love, without acquainting me. I

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. 51

am not sorry for my indulgence towards you, but your behaviour touches me very sensibly ; it's a way of acting which my fondness of you did not deserve.

Leonora. The reason of your talking thus I do not know ; but be assur'd, I am the same I always was : Nothing can alter my esteem for you ; a regard for any other, would, to me, seem criminal, and if you'd compleat my wishes, the sacred knot should make us one to-morrow.

Aristo. Upon what foundation then, brother, came you ———

Sganarel. What ! don't you come from Valere's lodgings ? Have you not this very day declar'd your passion ? and ha'n't you been in love with him for a year past ?

Leonora. Who has given you this fine account of me, and took the pains to invent such lyes ?

SCENE THE LAST.

ISABELLA, VALERE, LEONORA, ARISTO,
SGANAREL, The COMMISSARY, The NO-
TARY, LISETTA, ERGASTE.

ISABELLA.

SISTER, I beg you generously to pardon me, if I have brought any scandal upon your name by the liberties I have taken. The great perplexity a violent surprise occasion'd put me upon that shameful contrivance. Your example condemns such a passion, but fate deals differently with you and me. [to Sganarel.] As for you, Sir, I'll make no excuse, since I do you service, rather

32 THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS,

than use you ill. Heaven did not design us for one another. I found myself unworthy of your love, and chose much rather to be in another's arms than prove undeserving such an heart as yours.

Valere to Sganarel.] For my part, Sir, I esteem it my glory and happiness to receive her from your hands.

Aristo. Brother, you must put up this matter quietly; your own behaviour is the occasion of it, and I perceive it's your unhappy lot, that no body will be sorry for you tho' they know you're cheated.

Lisetta. By my faith I'm mighty glad of this affair, and this reward of his mistrust is an exemplary stroke.

Leonora. I can't tell if this contrivance ought to be commended, but for my part, I am sure I can't blame it.

Ergaste. His stars expos'd him to the danger of being a cuckold, and to escape upon the brink of being one is a lucky thing for him.

Sganarel. No, I can't get rid of my astonishment! This hellish trick perplexes my understanding, and I believe the devil in person could not be so wicked as this jilt. I could have engag'd my life it was not in her. After this, wretched is he that puts his trust in woman; the best of 'em are constantly hatching mischief; they were made to damn the whole world; — I renounce the treacherous sex for ever, and heartily wish 'em all at the devil

Ergaste. Well said.

Aristo. Let us all go to my house. Come, Mr. Valere, to-morrow we'll endeavour to appease his fury.

Lisetta to the Pit.] If any of you are acquainted with brutish husbands, send them hither to our school.

T H E E N D.

THE
SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

A
COMEDY.

C 3

A C T O R S.

ARNOLPH, otherwise Mr. de la Souche.

AGNES, daughter to Henriques.

HORACE, lover to Agnes.

CHRISALDUS, Arnolph's friend.

HENRIQUES, brother-in-law to Chrisaldus.

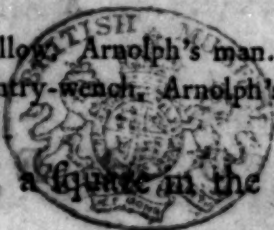
ORONTES, Horatio's father, and a friend to Arnolph.

A NOTARY.

ALLEN, a country-fellow, Arnolph's man.

GEORGETTA, a country-wench, Arnolph's maid.

SCENE PARIS, a square in the suburbs.



THE

SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

CHRISALDUS, ARNOLPH.

CHRISALDUS.

DY'E come, say you, to marry her?
 Arnolph. Yes, I'll make an end o' the affair to-morrow.

Chrisaldus. We're here alone, and may converse, I believe, without fear of being overheard. Would you have me open my heart to you as a friend? Your design makes me tremble with fear for you, and what way so ever you consider the matter, to marry is in you a very great piece of rashness.

Arnolph. My friend, that's true. Perhaps you find reason at home to be apprehensive for me: your own brows make you imagine, I suppose, that horns are every where the infallible appurtenances of matrimony.

Chrisaldus. Those are accidents no body is secure against, and the care people take on that account seems to me exceeding foolish. But when I'm afraid for you, it's because o' that raillery which an hundred husbands have endur'd the sting of. For in short, you're sensible

that neither high nor low have been exempted from your reflections, that your chief delight in every place you come, is to make a mighty outcry of secret intrigues ———

Arnolph. Very good. Is there another city in the world where husbands are so tame as here? Don't we see all sorts of 'em scurvily us'd at home? One heaps up wealth, which his spouse distributes to those who take the pains to make a cuckold of him. Another, a little more happy, but not less infamous, sees presents made to his wife every day, and yet no jealousy disturbs his mind, because she tells him 'tis out of regard to her virtue. One makes a mighty bustle, which serves but to little purpose: another, in perfect tranquillity, lets matters take their course, and seeing the spark come to his house, very civilly takes up his gloves and cloke. One wife, with female artifice, pretends to make a confident of her faithful husband, who sleeps securely under such delusion, and pities the poor galant for taking pains—which he does not lose. Another, to clear herself of extravagance, says, that she gets at play the money she lays out, and the silly husband, without dreaming at what game, thanks God for what she wins. In a word, there are every where these subjects of satire; and mayn't I laugh at 'em as a looker-on? Mayn't I of our fools ———

Chrisaldus. Yes; but whoever laughs at another should be afraid that in return others will also laugh at him. I hear what the world says, and how people divert themselves with tattling things that happen, but whatever's divulg'd in places where I come, no body ever knew me triumph at such reports. I'm reserv'd enough in that respect; and though I might, on these

occasions, blame certain degrees of forbearance, and my design were not by any means to suffer what some husbands quietly endure, yet, I have never affected to say this; for after all 'tis to be fear'd the satire will come home, and one should never positively swear what one may, or may not do, in such, or such a case. So that shou'd some human disgrace befall my brows, by an over-ruling fate that directs all things, I'm almost sure that, after my behaving in this manner, people would be satisfy'd with laughing at it underhand; and it may be I shou'd have the farther advantage that some good folks would say, it's pity. But as for you, dear friend, the case is quite otherwise, and again I tell you that you'll run a devilish hazard; for as your tongue has been always ready to banter patient husbands, and you've been a mere devil broke loose against 'em, you must walk upright indeed not to be made a laughing-stock: and if they get the least hank upon you, beware they don't publish your shame at the very market-cross. And —

Arnolph. Lack-a-day, friend, don't trouble your self. He must be mighty cunning that catches me as to that point. I'm acquainted with the artful tricks, the subtil contrivances which women make use of to ingraft horns upon us; and since we're fool'd by their dexterity, I've secur'd myself against that accident, for she I marry has innocence sufficient to preserve my forehead from any unlucky influence.

Chrisaldus. Hey, what do you pretend? that a fool, in one word —

Arnolph. To marry a fool, is to be no fool. I believe as a good christian, that your other half is exceeding wise; but a cunning wife is a very ill presage, and

I know what the taking those with too great abilities has cost certain people. Shall I charge myself with the care of a witty wife, who talks of nothing but the ring and the drawing-room? who writes soft things both in prose and verse, and whom the Marquis and the wits visit, whilst under the name of madam's husband, I should be like a saint that no body calls upon? No, no, I'm not for a high-flown genius; a woman that writes, understands more than she should. I intend that mine shall have in her so little of the sublime, that she shall not know even what a rhyme is; and should one play with her at the basket, and ask her in one's turn, what's put into't? I'd have her answer be, a cream tart. In a word, I'd have her extremely ignorant: it's sufficient, to tell you plainly, if she knows but how to say her prayers, to love me, to sew, and spin.

Chrisaldus. A stupid wife then is your fancy?

Arnolph. So much, that I should like an ugly fool better than a very handsome woman with a great deal of wit.

Chrisaldus. Wit and beauty ———

Arnolph. Virtue is sufficient.

Chrisaldus. But how, after all, won'd you have a fool ever know what it is to be virtuous? Besides, I believe it tiresome enough for a man to have a fool with him all his life-time. D'ye think, taking the matter right, that one's forehead can be well secur'd upon your scheme? A woman of sense may act contrary to her duty, but then she must do so knowingly, whereas a fool may fail in the common course of her's without having a mind to't, or even thinking of it.

Arnolph. To this fine argument, this profound discourse, I shall answer as Pantagruel did to Panurgus:

Persuade me to marry a woman that is not a fool, preach to me, plead from June to January, you'll be astonish'd, when you've done, to find that you've prevail'd not at all upon me.

Chrisaldus. I'll say not a word more t'ye.

Arnolph. Every one to his own way. In a wife, as in every thing else, I'll follow my own humour. I'm rich enough, I think, to take a wife with nothing, whose low station and intire dependance on me, mayn't allow her to reproach me either with her birth or fortune. A soft and staid look, when amongst other children, inspir'd me with a love for her from the time she was four years old. Her mother being very poor, it came into my head to beg her, and the good country-woman understanding my desire, was mighty glad to rid herself of the charge. I caus'd her to be brought up in a little convent, remote from all company, according to my own policy, that's to say, injoining them to employ all their pains to make her as much an idiot as possible. The success, thank heaven, answer'd my expectation; and when she grew up, I found her silly to such a degree, that I bless'd heaven for having done my business in giving me a wife exactly to my wish. I brought her home, and as my house is continually open to an hundred sorts of people, (precaution being always needful,) I have plac'd her out o' the way, in this other house, where no body comes to visit me; and that her good disposition mayn't be spoil'd, I keep none about her but people every whit as foolish as her self. You'll ask me, wherefore this long story? Why it's to let you see the care I have taken. — The result of all is, that this evening, as a faithful friend, I invite you to supper with

her: I'd have you examine her a little, and see whether I'm to be condemned for my choice.

Chrifaldus. I agree to't.

Arnolph. You may judge by this conversation with her, both of her person and her innocence.

Chrifaldus. As to that article, what you have told me can't

Arnolph. My description comes even short of the truth. I admire her simplicity on all occasions, and sometimes she says things that I'm ready to drop down with laughing at. T'other day (could one imagine it?) she was uneasy, and came to ask me, with an ignorance nothing can be equal to, whether children when they're born come into the world by the ear.

Chrifaldus. I am very glad, Mr. Arnolph—

Arnolph. How! Will you always call me by that name?

Chrifaldus. Why, do all I can it comes into my mouth, and I never remember Mr. de la Souche. What the dence has put it in your head to unchristen your self at two and forty years of age, and take a title upon you from an old rotten stump belonging to your farm?

Arnolph. Besides that the house is known by that name, la Souche is more agreeable to my ears than Arnolph.

Chrifaldus. What a shame is it to quit the real name of one's ancestors to take up another founded upon chimeras! Yet this is the whim of most people, and without including you in the comparison, I know a country-fellow call'd fat Peter, whose whole estate being only one single quarter of an acre, he made a muddy ditch all round it, and assum'd the pompous name of Mr. de L'Isle.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 61

Arnolph. You might let instances of this kind alone: in short, la Souche is the name I bear: I've a reason for it, I find a pleasure in it, and to call me by any other is disobliging me.

Chrisaldus. Most folks however hardly can submit to it, and I see even still the directions of your letters ———

Arnolph. I bear it easily from those who are not inform'd; but you ———

Chrisaldus. Be it so. We'll have no quarrel about that: I'll take care to use my mouth to call you nothing else but Mr. de la Souche.

Arnolph. Good b'ye. I knock here only to bid good-morrow, and tell that I'm come back.

Chrisaldus aside, going away.] Troth, I look upon him as an accomplish'd fool.

Arnolph alone.] He's a little touch'd as to some certain things. It's wonderful to see with how much passion every man is wedded to his own opinion?

[Knocking at his door.] Soho.

SCENE II.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN and GEORGETTA
in the house.

ALLEN.

WHO knocks?

Arnolph. Open the door. [aside.] They'll be very glad, I suppose, to see me after ten days absence.

Allen. Who's there?

Arnolph. I.

62 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Allen. Georgetta.

Georgetta. Well.

Allen. Open the door below there.

Georgetta. Go do it your self.

Allen. You go do't.

Georgetta. I won't go, faith.

Allen. And I won't go.

Arnolph. A pretty kind of ceremony, whilst I am left without! — Soho, soho there; pray —

Georgetta. Who knocks at the door?

Arnolph. Your master.

Georgetta. Allen?

Allen. What d'ye say?

Georgetta. It's my master. Open the door quickly.

Allen. Do you open it.

Georgetta. I'm blowing the fire.

Allen. I can't stir for fear of the cat, lest my spar-row shou'd get out.

Arnolph. Which ever of you two won't open the door, shan't have a bit of victuals for above these four days.

Georgetta. What occasion have you to come, when I am running?

Allen. Why you more than I? A fine contrivance truly!

Georgetta. Stand out o' the way.

Allen. I won't, stand you out o' the way.

Georgetta. I'll open the door.

Allen. And I'll open it.

Georgetta. You shan't open it.

Allen. No more shall you.

Georgetta. Nor you.

Arnolph. I had need have abundance of patience here.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 63

Allen entring.] However, 'tis my business, Sir.

Georgetta entring.] I'm your servant for that; 'tis mine.

Allen. Was not it out of respect to my master here, I'd ———

Arnolph receiving a blow from Allen.] Plague!

Allen. I ask pardon.

Arnolph. See that loggerhead there.

Allen. She's so too, Sir ———

Arnolph. Hold your tongues both of you. Ha' done with your fooling, and mind what I ask ye. Well, Allen, how do all here do?

Allen. Why, Sir, we we — [Arnolph pulls off Allen's hat three times.] Sir, we we are — thank heaven — we we ———

Arnolph. Impertinent fool, who taught you to talk to me with your hat upon your head?

Allen. You do well, Sir, I was in the wrong.

Arnolph to Allen.] Bid Agnes come down.

S C E N E III.

ARNOLPH, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

WAS she melancholy after I went away?

Georgetta. Melancholy? No,

Arnolph. No!

Georgetta. Yes, yes.

Arnolph. Why then —

Georgetta. Yes, let me die: She continually expected your coming back, and we saw neither horse, ass,

64 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

nor mule pass by the house, which she did not take for you.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN,
GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

HER work in her hand is a good sign — Well, Agnes, I'm come back from my journey. Are you glad of it?

Agnes. Yes, Sir, thank heav'n.

Arnolph. And I too am glad to see you again. You've been well all the time, as one may see.

Agnes. Except for the fleas that disturb'd me in the night.

Arnolph. O, in a little time you shall have some-body to catch 'em for you.

Agnes. You'll do me a kindness.

Arnolph. So I can easily imagine. What are you about there?

Agnes. I'm making myself some head-clothes. Your night-shirts and caps are done.

Arnolph. Hoh, that's well, go up stairs, don't tire your self, I shall be back again presently, and will talk to you about affairs of consequence.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPH alone.

YOU heroines of the age, you learned ladies, that utter tender and fine sentiments, I defy at once all your verses, your romances, your letters, your love-letters, and all your knowlege, to come up to the value of this modest and virtuous ignorance. It's not by riches one should be tempted; and provided that honour be—

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH,

ARNOLPH.

WHOM do I see? Is it he?—Ay. I'm mistaken. No, no. But it is. Nay, its he himself. Hor——

Horace. Mr. Ar——

Arnolph. Horace.

Horace. Arnolph.

Arnolph. O, joy extreme! How long have you been here?

Horace. Nine days.

Arnolph. Really——

Horace. I went directly to your house, but to no purpose.

Arnolph. I was in the country.

Horace. Ay, you'ad been gone two days.

Arnolph. How children shoot up in a few years! I'm surpriz'd to find him grown so, after having known him no bigger than this.

66 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Horace. You see how it is.

Arnolph. But, pray, how does Orontes your father, my good and dear friend, whom I respect and revere? Is he hearty still? He knows I bear a part in every thing which concerns him; we have not seen one another for these four years, nor writ to one another, which is still more, methinks.

Horace. He's even heartier than we are, Mr. Arnolph:—I've got a letter for you from him: but by another since he sends me word of his own coming, tho' I don't yet know the reason of it.—Do you know who of your townsmen it should be, that's upon his return hither with abundance of wealth, which he has been fourteen years acquiring in the West-Indies?

Arnolph. No. Was you told his name?

Horace. Henriques.

Arnolph. No.

Horace. My father speaks to me of him and his return, as if I was perfectly acquainted with him; and writes me word they are setting out together upon an affair of consequence, which his letter does not mention.

[Giving Orontes's letter to Arnolph.]

Arnolph. I shall certainly be extremely glad to see him, and will do all in my power to entertain him. [After having read the letter.] Letters amongst friends should be less ceremonious; all these compliments are needless things; you might freely have us'd my fortune, without his taking the pains to write to me on that score.

Horace. I'm one who take people at their word: and I've just now occasion for an hundred Pistoles.

Arnolph. Troth, to make use of me in this manner, is to oblige me, and I'm glad I've got 'em ready for you.—take purse and all.

Horace. It must——

Arnolph. Let us drop this discourse. Well, what d'ye think of this city?

Horace. Its inhabitants are numerous, its buildings sumptuous, and I believe its diversions admirable.

Arnolph. Every man has his pleasures suitable to his taste; but as for those who are call'd galants; they have all they can wish in this country; for the women are made for coquetry, you'll find 'em of gentle temper, both the fair and the brown, and the husbands are withal the civilest creatures in the world. It's an entertainment for a prince, it's a meer comedy to me to see the pranks I do.—May be you've already smitten somebody.—Have you had no luck yet? people form'd like you are more worth than gold;—you're of a shape to be a cuckold-maker.

Horace. To conceal nothing from you of the naked truth, I've had here a certain love-adventure, and I'm obliged in friendship to acquaint you with it.

Arnolph aside.] Good. Here's some new waggish story to minute down in my pocket-book.

Horace. But I beg, however, this matter may be a secret.

Arnolph. Oh!

Horace. You're not ignorant that on these occasions, if a secret gets air it breaks all our measures. I'll freely confess t'ye then, that a certain fair one in this place has captivated my heart. My small endeavours have immediately had so much success, that I've obtain'd a free admittance to her; and without boasting of myself too much, or doing her an injury, my affairs with her are in a mighty good posture.

Arnolph laughing.] Ha, ha, who is't?

Horace pointing to Agnes's lodging.] A young creature that lodges in the house with red walls you see yonder.—Simple indeed she is, thro' the matchless folly of a man who hides her from all company; but amidst that ignorance to which he wou'd enslave her, she discovers charms that wou'd throw one into raptures; an air most engaging, and I know not what of tenderness, which no heart is proof against. But, perhaps you've often seen this young star of love, adorn'd with so many perfections. They call her Agnes.

Arnolph aside.] Oh! I burst.

Horace. As for the man, 'tis, I think la Zouffe, or Source, that they call him; I don't much concern myself about his name. He's rich, by what they told me, but not over-wise. They talk'd to me of him as a ridiculous fellow. D'ye know him?

Arnolph aside.] A bitter pill!

Horace. What! don't you answer?

Arnolph. O, ay—I know him.

Horace. He is a fool, is not he?

Arnolph. Heh——

Horace. How now? what d'ye say to't? Heh! that means yes. Ridiculously jealous: Fool? I find he's just as I was told. In short, the lovely Agnes has conquer'd me; to tell you the truth, she's a charming creature, and 'twould be a sin to let a beauty so extraordinary remain in the power of this whimsical fellow. For my part, all my endeavours, all my most passionate wishes are, to make her mine, in spite of this jealous wretch; and the money I was so free to borrow of you, is for no other purpose but to bring about this laudable enterprise. You know better than I, that whate'er we undertake, gold is the master-key; and that sweet metal

which distracts so many heads, procures the victory in love as well as war. But methinks you don't seem pleas'd: is it that you disapprove my project?

Arnolph. No, I was considering——

Horace. This conversation tires you: Farewel. I'll come by-and-by to your house, to thank you.

[Arnolph thinking himself alone.] What! must it——

[Horace coming back.] Once more, I beseech you to be wary, and not go to divulge my secret.

[Arnolph thinking himself alone.] What my soul now feels——

[Horace coming back.] Especially to my father, who would make it perhaps a subject of anger.

[Arnolph thinking he'll come back again.] Oh!——
[alone.] Oh! what have I suffered during this discourse! never vexation was equal sure to mine! With what imprudence and what extreme haste he came to give an account of this business to me myself! Tho' my other name keeps him in an error, yet did ever any hair-brains run on so furiously? But having suffer'd so much, I should have check'd myself, till I had discover'd what I have reason to apprehend; I should have encouraged his foolish babbling to inform myself perfectly thereby, of what is carrying on privately between 'em. Let's try to join him again, he's not got far, I believe; let's worm out of him the whole secret of this matter. I tremble for fear of the misfortune that may befall me by so doing; one often seeks after what one would not find.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH.

'TIS luck for me, I really think, that I lost my walk, and miss'd of the way he went; for in short the overbearing confusion of my mind could not have entirely conceal'd itself from him; 'twould have discover'd the grief that preys upon me, and I would not have him know what he is ignorant of at present. But I'm not a man that can put up this matter, and leave the spark at liberty to pursue his design. I am resolv'd to break the neck on't, and learn immediately how far affairs have been carry'd on between them. I take it, that my honour is deeply concern'd therein: as the case stands, I consider her as a wife already. She can't be tardy but 'twill redound to my shame, and whate'er she does will be plac'd to my account. O fatal absence! unhappy journey!

[Knocking at the door.]

SCENE II.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ALLEN.

AH! Sir, this time——

Arnolph. Be quiet. Come hither both of ye: That way, that way. Come along, come along, I say.

Georgetta. Ah! you frighten me! all my blood runs cold!

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 71

Arnolph. Is this the way you've obeyed me in my absence? and have you both betray'd me by agreement?

[Georgetta falling at Arnolph's feet.] Oh! don't eat me, Sir, I beseech you.

Allen aside.] I'm certain some mad dog has bit him.

Arnolph aside.] Ugh! I can't speak I came so fast, I'm stifled; wou'd I cou'd throw off all my clothes. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Ye cursed scoundrels, you've permitted a man to come then, have ye——What, would you run away?——You must this instant——if you stir——I'll have you tell me. Ugh! Ay, I'll have you both——S'death! whoever stirs I'll murder him——How came that man into my house? Heh!——speak, [panting.] make haste, quick, dispatch, in a moment, without considering; will ye tell me?

Allen and Georgetta. Oh! Oh!

Georgetta falling at Arnolph's feet.] I swoon.

Allen falling at Arnolph's feet.] I die.

Arnolph aside.] I'm all over in a sweat: Let me take a little breath. I must walk and cool myself. Could I have imagin'd when I saw him a little one, that he would grow up for this! Heavens! what my heart endures! 'Twould be better I think to draw from her own mouth by kind usage an account of what concerns me. Let me try to moderate my passion. Patience, my heart, gently, gently. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Rise, get ye in, and bid Agnes come down. Stay. [Aside.] They'll go tell her the uneasiness I'm under, and she'll be the less surpris'd. I'll fetch her out myself. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Wait here for me.

SCENE III.

ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

GEORGETTA.

GOOD-LACK! how terrible he is! his looks frighten me horribly; and I never saw a more hideous christian.

Allen. That gentleman has anger'd him, I told you so.

Georgetta. But what the deuce is the matter that he makes us keep in our mistress with so much strictness? Why wou'd he hide her thus from all the world, and cannot bear to see any body come near her?

Allen. 'Tis because this affair makes him jealous.

Georgetta. But how comes this fancy into his head?

Allen. It comes——it comes, because he's jealous.

Georgetta. Ay; but wherefore is he so? and why this passion?

Allen. It's because jealousy . . . d'ye understand me right, Georgetta, is a thing——which——makes people uneasy——and drives 'em all round the house. I'll give you a comparison, that you may conceive it better. Now tell me the truth, when you've got a mess of porridge, if some greedy gut should come to eat it from you, wou'dn't you fall in a passion and be ready to beat him?

Georgetta. Ay, I understand that.

Allen. It's just in the same manner. Woman really is a man's porridge; and when a man sees other folks endeavouring to dip their fingers in his porridge, he flies immediately into a violent fury,

Georgetta.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 73

Georgetta. Ay; but why doesn't every body do so alike? Why see we some that appear pleas'd when their wives are with fine gentlemen?

Allen. Because every body hasn't this gluttonous love, that would keep all to itself.

Georgetta. If my eyes are not dazzled, I see him coming.

Allen. Your eyes are good: 'tis he.

Georgetta. Look how melancholy he is.

Allen. That's because he's vex'd.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH aside.

A CERTAIN Greek told Augustus the emperor, as a maxim equally useful and reasonable, that when any accident puts us in a passion, we should first of all repeat the alphabet; that in the mean while our anger may abate, and we may do nothing which we ought not to do. This advice I've follow'd in the affair of Agnes; and I have brought her on purpose hither, under pretence of taking a walk, to the intent that the suspicions of my disorder'd mind may artfully bring this discourse about so as to dive into her heart, and clear up the matter gently.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

COME, Agnes. [To Allen and Georgetta.] Get ye in.

VOL. II.

D

S C E N E VI.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH.

'TIS fine walking.

Agnes. Very fine.

Arnolph. A charming day!

Agnes. Mighty charming.

Arnolph. What news have ye?

Agnes. The little cat is dead.

Arnolph. It's pity: But what! we're all mortal, and every one for himself. Didn't it rain whilst I was in the country?

Agnes. No.

Arnolph. Were you not tired?

Agnes. I never am tired.

Arnolph. But what have you done these nine or ten days?

Agnes. Six shirts, I think, and likewise six caps.

Arnolph having mus'd a while.] This world is a strange world, my dear Agnes. Observe the scandal, and how every one prattles. Some o' the neighbours have been telling me that a young man, a stranger, came to my house in my absence, and that you permitted him to see and talk with you. But I gave no credit to these flattering tongues, and would have laid a wager it was false ———

Agnes. Lack-a-day, don't lay, you'll certainly lose.

Arnolph. What! is it true that a man ———

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 73

Agnes. 'Twas really so. He scarce stirr'd out of our house, I'll swear.

Arnolph aside.] This sincere declaration shews me her ingenuity however. [Aloud.] But, methinks, Agnes, if I remember right, I forbid your seeing any body.

Agnes. Yes: But tho' I saw him, you don't know the reason of it. You'd certainly have done so as well as I.

Arnolph. That may be; but, in short, tell me how this matter was.

Agnes. It's very surprizing, and almost incredible. I was out in the balcony a working in the fresh air, when I saw a well-made young man pass along under the trees just by, who perceiving me look at him, immediately bow'd to me very respectfully: I, not to fail in civility, return'd him a curtsy. He presently bow'd to me again, I took care to make him another curtsy; and he bowing to me a third time, I also instantly answer'd with a third curtsy. He walk'd to and fro, making me every time the handsomest bow that cou'd be, and I, who look'd at him earnestly all the while, made him as many curtsies: so that if night had not come on, I should still have continued in that manner, being unwilling to give over, or to lie under the dissatisfaction of having him believe me less complaisant than he.

Arnolph. Mighty well.

Agnes. The day after, being at our door, an old woman came up and accosted me after this manner: My child, may good heaven bless thee, and long preserve thee in all thy beauty! It has not made thee such a lovely creature for thee to misemploy its gifts; and thou shon'd'st know, that thou has wounded an heart which now is forced to complain of it.

Arnolph aside.] Ah! Agent of the devil! damn'd cursed jade!

Agnes. I! have I wounded any body? answered I, quite astonish'd. Wounded! Ay, thou hast wounded him indeed, cries she; and it's the gentleman thou sawest from the balcony yesterday. Alas! says I, how could I possibly do it? Did I throw any thing down upon him carelessly? No, replies she, thine eyes have given the fatal stroke, and it's from their glances all his hurt proceeds. Good lack! says I, I'm surpris'd the most that ever was; can my eyes do people any harm? Ay, daughter, cries she, thine eyes have a deadly poison in 'em which thou dost not know of. In a word, the poor wretch is languishing away, and if so be, continues the charitable old woman, thy cruelty refuses him assistance, he'll be a dead man in two days time. Bless me! I shou'd be very sorry for't, says I; but what assistance does he require of me! my child, cries she, he only requests the happiness of seeing thee, and talking to thee: thine eyes alone are able to prevent his ruin, and remedy the mischief they have produc'd. Lack-a-day! with all my heart, says I, and since it is so, he may come to see me as often as he has a mind to't.

Arnolph aside.] O cursed sorcerers! poisoner of souls! may hell reward thy charitable wiles!

Agnes. So he saw me and receiv'd a cure. Don't you yourself think now, that I had reason for what I did? and after all, could I have the conscience to let him die for want of help? I who am so full of pity for those that suffer, that I can't see a chicken die without weeping.

Arnolph aside softly.] All this is only the effect of an innocent mind; and I must blame my own indiscreet

absence for it, which left this perfect goodness expos'd to the designs of artful seducers, without any adviser. I fear the rascal, by his impudent pretences, has carry'd the matter somewhat beyond a jest.

Agnes. What ails you? methinks you're a little out of humour. Is it that I did amiss in what I told you?

Arnolph. No. But tell me what follow'd upon this interview, and how the young man behav'd in his visits.

Agnes. Lack-a-day! did you but know how he was transported, how he lost his illnefs as soon as I saw him, the present he has made me of a fine casket, and the mony our Allen and Georgetta have had of him, you'd certainly be in love with him, and say as we do.

Arnolph. Well, but what did he do when he was alone with you?

Agnes. He said he loved me with an unequall'd passion, and told me in the finest language in the world, things that nothing ever can come up to; the agreeableness whereof delighted me every time I heard him speak; and rais'd within me a certain I know not what emotion which intirely charm'd me.

Arnolph aside.] O tormenting enquiry into a fatal secret, where the enquirer only suffers all the pain! [Aloud.] Besides all this talk, all these pretty ways, didn't he bestow some kisses on you too?

Agnes. Oh, to that degree! he took my hands and arms, and was never weary of kissing 'em.

Arnolph. Did he take nothing else from you, Agnes? [Seeing her at a loss.] Hah!

Agnes. Why, he did —

Arnolph. What?

Agnes. Take —

Arnolph. How!

78 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Agnes. The ———

Arnolph. What d'ye mean?

Agnes. I durst not tell you; for, may be, you'll be angry wi' me.

Arnolph. No.

Agnes. Yes but you will.

Arnolph. Lack-a-day, I won't,

Agnes. Swear faith then.

Arnolph. Well, faith.

Agnes. He took ——— You'll be in a passion.

Arnolph. No.

Agnes. Yes.

Arnolph. No, no, no, no: What the deuce is this mystery? What did he take from you?

Agnes. He ———

Arnolph aside.] I suffer damnation.

Agnes. He took away the ribbon you gave me; to tell you the truth, I cou'd not help it.

Arnolph recovering himself.] No matter for the ribbon. But I want to know whether he did nothing but kifs your hands.

Agnes. Why! do people do other things?

Arnolph. No, no. But didn't he desire of you some other remedy to cure the disorder he said had seiz'd him?

Agnes. No, you may imagine, had he desir'd it, I should have granted any thing to do him good.

Arnolph aside.] Heaven's goodness be prais'd, I'm come cheaply off. If I fall into the like mistake again, I'll consent to be ill us'd. [Aloud.] Peace, 'tis an effect of your innocence, Agnes: I'll say no more of it: What's done is done. I'm sensible that by flattering you,

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 79

the spark only wants to impose upon you, and afterwards to laugh at you.

Agnes. Oh, no, he told me so above twenty times.

Arnolph. Oh! you don't know how little he is to be believ'd. But in short I must tell you. that to accept caskets, and hearken to the idle stories of these powder'd fops, to permit 'em, in a languishing way, to kiss your hands and charm your heart in this manner, is a mortal sin, the greatest that can be committed.

Agnes. A sin, d'ye say! The reason, pray?

Arnolph. The reason? Why the reason is, because it's declar'd that heaven is offended at such doings.

Agnes. Offended! But wherefore should it be offended? Lack-a-day! 'tis so sweet, so pleasant! I admire at the delight one finds in't, and didn't know these things before.

Arnolph. Ay, there's a great deal of pleasure in all these tendernesses, these complaisant discourses, these fond embraces; but they should be tasted in an honest manner, and the sin should be taken away by marrying.

Agnes. Is it no more a sin when a body's marry'd?

Arnolph. No.

Agnes. Then marry me out of hand, I pray.

Arnolph. If you desire it, I desire it too, and came back on purpose to marry you.

Agnes. Is that possible?

Arnolph. Yes.

Agnes. How glad you'll make me!

Arnolph. Ay, I don't question but matrimony will please you.

Agnes. Will you have us two —

Arnolph. Nothing more certain.

Agnes. If it be so, I shall embrace you.

80 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Arnolph. And I shall do the same by you.

Agnes. For my part, I don't understand when people are in jest. Do you speak seriously?

Arnolph. Ay, you shall see I do.

Agnes. We shall be marry'd then?

Arnolph. Yes.

Agnes. But when?

Arnolph. This very evening.

Agnes laughing.] This very evening?

Arnolph. This very evening. Does it make you laugh then?

Agnes. Yes.

Arnolph. It's my desire to see you happy.

Agnes. Lack-a-day! how greatly I am oblig'd to you! and what satisfaction shall I enjoy with him!

Arnolph. With whom?

Agnes. With — him there.

Arnolph. Him there — I don't talk of him there: you're a little forward, methinks, to choose an husband. In a word, it's another body I've got ready for you; and as for that gentleman there, I intend, by your favour, (even tho' the malady he amuses you with, should be the death of him,) that henceforward you shall break off all acquaintance with him: that when he comes to the house, your compliment shall be civilly to shut the door upon him, and if he knocks, throw a stone at him out o' the window, and oblige him in good earnest to appear there no more. D'ye understand me, Agnes? I'll lie conceal'd in a corner, and be witness of your behaviour.

Agnes. Alack! he's so handsome, 'tis —

Arnolph. Heh! what a speech!

Agnes. I shan't ha' the heart —

Arnolph. No more disputing. Go up stairs.

Agnes. But what? Will you —

Arnolph. 'Tis enough I'm master; I command, go you and obey.

ACT III. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN,
GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

INDEED every thing has succeeded well, and I'm delighted extremely: You've follow'd my directions to a wonder, and utterly confounded the handsome seducer. This it is to have a discreet adviser: your innocence, Agnes, had been insnar'd; and see what a condition you'd ha' been in, before you were aware on't. You were running directly on in the high road to hell and destruction, had not I set you right. One knows the ways of all these blades but too well; they've fine stockings, ribbons and feathers in abundance, vast wigs, good teeth, and a smooth tongue; but I assure you, there's a cloven foot underneath, and they are devils in reality, whose voracious appetite endeavours to make a prey of female honour. However, this time, thanks to the care has been taken, you're escap'd with your virtue. The air wherewith I saw you sling that stone at him, which has render'd all his designs hopeless, makes me still more resolv'd not to delay the nuptials, for which I told you to prepare your self. But it's proper, first of all, to have a little talk with you, that may be to your

84 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

advantage. [to Georgetta and Allen.] Bring out a chair hither. If you ever —

Georgetta. We'll remember all your instructions perfectly: T'other gentleman there impos'd upon us: But —

Allen. If ever he gets in any more, may I never drink again. Besides he's a blockhead, he gave us two crown pieces t'other day that were not weight.

Arnolph. Get what I order'd for supper, and as for our contract which I spoke of, let one of you fetch the Notary hither, that lives at the corner of the market-place.

SCENE II.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH sitting.

PUT away your work, Agnes, that you may hearken to me: hold your head up a little, and turn your face: There; look at me so whilst I'm speaking, and be sure remember every tittle of what I say. Agnes, I intend to marry you, and you ought an hundred times a day to bless your fate, to consider the humble condition you were in, and at the same time admire my goodness, which from the low station of a poor country-girl raises you to the honourable rank of a citizen's wife; to enjoy both the bed and the embraces of a man who has shun'd all such engagements, and whose heart has refus'd the honour 'twill do you, to twenty people very capable of pleasing. You ought, I say, continually to have in mind, how insignificant you wou'd be without this glori-

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 83

ous alliance, to the intent that consideration may the better teach you to deserve the station I shall place you in, and make you always know your self, so that I may ne'er repent of what I do. Matrimony, Agnes, is not a trifling thing; severe duties are requir'd of a wife; and I don't design to exalt you to that condition, for you to be a Libertine and take your pleasure. Your sex is meerly dependant in that state, all the power is on the husband's side; tho' they're two parts of the same body, yet those two parts are by no means equal; one is the superior part, and t'other is subordinate: the one is in all cases subject to the other that governs: and that obedience which the well-disciplin'd soldier shews to his general, the servant to his master, a child to his father, or the lowest monk to his superior, comes even very short of the tractableness, the submission, the humility, and the profound respect which a wife should have for her husband, her chief, her lord and master. When he looks seriously upon her she should turn her eyes immediately upon the ground, and ne'er presume to look him in the face, till he favours her with a gracious glance. This is what our wives now-a-days little understand, but be not you corrupted by the example of other people. Beware of imitating those vile coquettes, whose pranks are talk'd of all the city over: and don't let the devil tempt you, that is to say, hearken to no young coxcomb. Consider, Agnes, that by making you part of myself, I give you up my honour, which honour is tender, and offended at a little matter; that there's no trifling on such an occasion as this, and that in hell there are boiling cauldrons wherein wives that live wickedly are plung'd for ever and ever. I'm not telling you a pack of stories, and these lessons should be imprinted in your

heart. If you practise 'em sincerely, and avoid being a coquette, your soul will be always as white and spotless as a lily, but if you forfeit your honour, 'twill become as black as a coal; you'll seem an hideous creature to every body, and in time you'll be the devil's property, and boil in hell to all eternity, from which may heaven's goodness preserve you. Make a curtsy. As a probationer in a convent must know her duty by heart, so she that marries should do the very same: and I've a writing of great importance in my pocket, which will teach you the duty of a wife. I don't know the author of it, but it's some good body, and I'd have this be your only study. [He gets up.] Hold: Let's see if you can read it easily. [Agnes reads.

Maxims of Wedlock, or the duties of a married woman; together with her daily exercise.

I. MAXIM.

"SHE that enters into the state of matrimony, ought to remember, notwithstanding the train of admirers other women have now-a-days, that the man who takes her, takes her only for himself.

Arnolph. I shall explain to you what that means; but for the present let us only read.

[Agnes goes on.

II. MAXIM.

"She ought not to dress herself, but according to her husband's liking. The care of her beauty is what concerns him only, and she should not regard tho' other people think her homely.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 85

III. MAXIM.

" Far be from her the study of ogling, beauty-washes,
" paints, pomatums, and a thousand ingredients that
" set off the complexion. These are always mortal
" poisons to honour, and the pains bestow'd to appear
" handsome, are seldom for the husband's sake.

IV. MAXIM.

" When she goes abroad, she ought, as honour re-
" quires, to prevent the wounds her eyes might give, by
" concealing them under her hood: for in order to please
" her husband perfectly, she should please no body else.

V. MAXIM.

" Except such folks as pay visits to her husband, de-
" cency forbids her receiving any friend whatever; those
" people of galantry that have no business but with the
" wife, are not at all agreeable to the husband.

VI. MAXIM.

" She must refuse all presents from men, for in the
" age we live, nothing is given for nothing.

VII. MAXIM.

" Amongst her moveables, should she be displeased at
" it, there must neither be scrutoir, ink, paper, nor
" pens. The husband, according to good custom, shou'd
" write all that is written in his family.

VIII. MAXIM.

" Those disorderly societies call'd assemblies, which al-
" ways corrupt the minds of women, ought in good po-
" licy to be forbidden them; for there it is they con-
" trive their plots against poor husbands.

IX. MAXIM.

" Every woman that would preserve her honour,
 " ought to refrain from gaming as a terrible thing; for
 " play is very bewitching, and often drives a woman to
 " her last stake.

X. MAXIM.

" Publick walks she must not come into, nor accept
 " of treats in the country; for the wife are of opinion,
 " 'tis the husband always pays for such entertainments.

Arnolph. You shall make an end on't by your self,
 and by-and-by I'll explain these matters to you, as they
 shou'd be, line by line. I have a little affair come into
 my head, 'tis only to speak a word, and I shan't stay at
 all. Go in, and take a special care of that book. If the
 Notary comes, let him wait for me a little.

S C E N E III.

ARNOLPH alone.

I CAN'T do better than to make her my wife. I
 shall be able to manage her just as I've a mind. She's
 in my hands exactly like a piece of wax, and I may give
 her what form I please. I very narrowly escap'd be-
 ing chous'd in my absence thro' her over innocence;
 but to say the truth, one's wife's failings had much bet-
 ter be from that cause; for such sort of mistakes are
 easily amended. All simple people are attentive to ad-
 vice, and if they're led out o' the right way, a word or
 two will bring them into it again immediately. But a

witty wife is quite another kind of creature; our fate depends on her judgment only; nothing can divert her from pursuing what she is once set upon, and all our precepts, in this case, prove abortive. Her wit enables her to ridicule our maxims, to make virtues of her faults, and find out ways of deceiving the most dext'rous; in order to bring about her wicked purposes. We labour in vain to turn aside the blow; a woman of wit is a devil at intrigue, and after her caprice has silently pass'd sentence on our honour, it must be submitted to. A great many honest people are able to declare as much, But my blunderbuss shall find no cause to laugh; he has met with what he deserves for tattling. This is the common fault of our Frenchmen, in the possession of good fortune they are never easy, while it's a secret, and so dear to 'em is this senseless vanity, that they would rather lose their happiness than not talk of it. Sure the devil must be very strong in women when they choose such rattle pates! and——But here he comes: let me be upon my guard, and find out how much he's mortify'd.

SCENE IV.

HORACE, ARNOLPH.

HORACE.

I'M just come from your house, where fate seems resolv'd I should never meet with you; but I'll go so often, that some moment at last shall——

Arnolph: Pöh! don't let us enter upon these useless compliments; nothing is so tiresome to me as ceremony,

and could I prevail, it shou'd be entirely banish'd. It's a wretched custom, wherein most people waste two parts in three of their time. Let's leave it off then without any more ado. [Puts on his hat.] Well, as to your love-affair, Mr. Horace, may I be inform'd how you go in't? I was taken off before by some business that came in my head, but I've been considering of it since: I admire the quick progress you've made at the beginning, and am solicitous for the event.

Horace. Troth since I laid open my heart to you, my passion has been unfortunate.

Arnolph. Ay! how so?

Horace. Cruel fortune has brought my fair one's master back again out o' the country.

Arnolph. What a misfortune!

Horace. And besides, to my very great sorrow, he knows what has pass'd in private between us two.

Arnolph. How the deuce cou'd he learn this affair so soon?

Horace. That I can't tell: But it is certainly so. I intended at my usual hour to pay a short visit to this charming girl, when the man and maid both, with a voice and countenance alter'd from what they us'd to be, oppos'd my entrance, and shut the door to my face with a Get you gone, you're troublesome.

Arnolph. The door to your face!

Horace. To my face.

Arnolph. That's a little hard.

Horace. I wou'd have talk'd to 'em thro' the door, but to all that I could say their answer was, You sha'n't come in, my master has forbid it.

Arnolph. Didn't they open the door then?

Horace. No. And Agnes confirm'd her master's re-

turn to me from the window, by bidding me be gone in a very angry tone, and flinging a stone at me.

Arnolph. How! a stone?

Horace. A stone that was none of the least neither, by which with her own hands she receiv'd my visit.

Arnolph. The devil! These are no jokes: your affair, I think, is in a sad condition.

Horace. Very true, I'm in a bad way by this unlucky return of his.

Arnolph. Really I'm sorry for you, I protest I am.

Horace. This man breaks all my measures.

Arnolph. Ay, but that's nothing; you'll find a way of setting your self to rights again.

Horace. I must endeavour by some intelligence to baffle the strict vigilance of this jealous fellow.

Arnolph. You'll easily do that, for when all's done the girl loves you.

Horace. Without doubt she does.

Arnolph. You'll bring matters to bear.

Horace. I hope so.

Arnolph. That stone has perplex'd you, but you shou'd not wonder at it.

Horace. That's certain, for I presently found out that my rival was there, and manag'd the whole affair without being seen in't. But what surpris'd me, and what you will wonder at, was another accident I'm going to tell you of, a bold stroke of the lovely girl, which one wou'dn't have expected from her simplicity. It must be confess'd, love is a skilful master; he teaches us to be what we never were before, and oftentimes an intire alteration in our manners becomes by his lessons only a moment's work. He breaks thro' the obstacles of nature in us, and his sudden effects have the appearance of

miracles. In an instant he makes a miser liberal, a coward courageous, a churl obliging; he renders the dullest capacity fit for every thing, and gives wit to the most ignorant. This last miracle is indeed remarkable in Agnes, for snapping me up in these very words; Get you gone, I'm resolv'd ne'er to receive your visits; I know all you have to say, and there's my answer. This stone, or this pebble, at which you'd wonder, fell down with a letter at my feet; and what I admire is to find this letter adapted exactly to the meaning of her words, and the stone she threw. Are not you amaz'd at such an action as this? Does not love know the art of quickening the understanding? And can it be deny'd that his powerful flames have astonishing effects upon the mind? What d'ye say to all this? What think you of the letter? Heh! don't you admire this cunning contrivance? Isn't it comical to observe what a part my jealous rival has been acting with all this foolery? Tell me——

Arnolph. Ay, very comical.

Horace. Laugh at it a little then. [Arnolph forces a laugh.] This military man, who fortifies himself in his own house against my passion, and seems provided with stones, as tho' I meant to enter by storm, who in a whimsical fright encourages all his servants to drive me away, is impos'd upon before his face, even by his own instrument, by her whom he would keep in the utmost ignorance. I own, for my part, tho' his return has thrown my affair under a very great difficulty, I think 'tis so exceeding comical that I can't forbear laughing whene'er it comes into my head, and methinks you don't laugh at it enough.

Arnolph with a forc'd laugh.] I beg your pardon, I laugh at it as much as I'm able.

Horace. But I must shew you her letter as a friend. All that her heart felt, her hand has there writ down; but in terms so affecting, so perfectly full of goodness, of innocent tenderness and sincerity! in short, in the very manner that pure nature expresses the first wound love gives.

[Arnolph aside.] This is the consequence of your writing, you stat: 'twas contrary to my intention that you was taught it.

[Horace reads.] " I've a mind to write to you, but
 " I'm at a loss where I shall begin. I have some thoughts
 " which I'm desirous you should be acquainted with; but
 " I don't know how to tell 'em you, and distrust my
 " want of words. As I begin to understand that I've
 " always been kept in ignorance, I'm afraid of writing
 " something that would be wrong, or saying more than
 " I shou'd do. In troth, I can't tell what you've done
 " to me; but I find that I'm ready to die with vexation
 " for what I'm forc'd to do against you, that 'twould
 " give me all the uneasiness in the world to lose you,
 " and that I should be mighty glad to be yours. There's
 " harm, perhaps, in saying so, but really I can't for-
 " bear, tho' I wish it could have been brought about,
 " and no harm had been in it. I'm told, for certain,
 " that all young men are false, that what they say must
 " not be minded, and that every thing you tell me is on-
 " ly to deceive me: But I assure you, I can't yet ima-
 " gine that of you, and I'm so affected by your words,
 " that I don't know how to believe they're lies. Tell
 " me generously if they be; for as I'm without any ill
 " design, you'd do the greatest injury in the world should
 " you deceive me, and I believe I shou'd die with the
 " vexation of it.

Arnolph aside.] Um, Bitch!

Horace. What d'ye say?

Arnolph. I? Nothing. I only cough'd.

Horace. Did you ever see more tenderness of expression? in spite of all the cursed endeavours of unreasonable power, is it possible to find a better natural capacity? and isn't it certainly a mortal sin villanously to spoil such an admirable genius? to be desirous of obscuring the brightness of such a mind in ignorance and stupidity? But love has begun to pull off the mask; and if by the favour of some lucky star I can be able to deal with this mere animal, this traitor, this hang-dog, this scoundrel, this brute——

Arnolph. Good by t'ye.

Horace. Why in such a hurry?

Arnolph. An urgent affair is come into my mind this instant.

Horace. But don't you know any body (as you live near at hand) that cou'd get admittance into this house? I make free with you, and 'tis not unusual for friends to serve one another on these occasions. At present I've no body in it but people to watch me; the man and maid both, as I found just now, notwithstanding all that I could do, would not be so civil as to hear me. I had a certain old woman in my interest for some time, of a genius, to say the truth, more than human. She did me great service at the beginning; but the poor woman has been dead these four days. Can't you put me in some way?

Arnolph. No, really; you'll find out some without me.

Horace. Farewel then. You see what confidence I put in you.

I I SCENE V. T O A

ARNOLPH alone.

HOW I'm oblig'd to mortify myself before him! What a pain it is to conceal my tormenting anguish! What! a simpleton have so much ready wit! such the traitress has pretended to be in my sight. Where the devil has her soul suck'd in this subtilty? After all, that fatal letter is the death o'me. I find the rascal has corrupted her mind, and by displacing me has fix'd himself there: This gives me despair, and mortal pain. I suffer doubly by being robbed of her heart, for thereby love is injur'd as well as honour. It makes me mad to find my place usurp'd, and it mads me also to see my prudent measures defeated. I'm sensible that to punish her guilty passion, I need only leave her to her evil destiny, and that she herself would revenge me upon herself; but it's very grievous to lose the thing one loves. Heavens! after making use of so much philosophy in my choice, why must I be so mightily bewitched by her charms? She has neither parents, friends, nor mony; she abuses my care, my favours, my tenderness; and yet I love her, even after this base affair, so much that I'm unable to throw off this fondness. Fool! hast thou no shame? Oh I burst! I rave! and I cou'd box myself a thousand times. I'll step in a little, but only to see how she looks after so vile an action. Heaven grant that my brows my be free from dishonour! but if 'tis decreed that I must suffer it, bestow upon me at least that fortitude which some people are endow'd with to bear such accidents!

A C T IV. S C E N E I.

A R N O L P H.

I CAN'T be easy, I must confess, in any place; for my mind is under a thousand perplexities how to manage things both within doors and without, so as to disappoint the projects of this coxcomb. With what an assurance the traitress bore the sight o' me! She's not at all concern'd at what she has done; and tho' she has brought me within an inch of the grave, one would swear, to look at her, that she had not the least hand in't. The more she appear'd compos'd when I saw her, the more was I enrag'd, and those boiling transports which inflam'd my heart, seem'd only to redouble my ardent passion. I was provok'd, vex'd, incens'd against her, and yet I never saw her look so handsome; her eyes, methought, never were before so piercing, never did they before inspire me with such violent desires; and I perceive 'twould kill me should my evil destiny bring this disgrace upon me. What? Have I brought her up with so much tenderness and precaution? Have I taken her to me from her infancy? Have I indulg'd the fondest hopes? Must I build upon her growing charms? And during thirteen years have I fondled her to be my own, as I imagin'd, for a young fool whom she's in love with to come and run away with her before my face, and that even when she's half marry'd to me? No, by heavens, my foolish young friend; by heavens, no: You must be a cunning fellow to overturn my scheme, or else, by my faith, I shall render all your hopes abortive, and you'll find no cause to laugh at me.

SCENE II.

A NOTARY, ARNOLPH.

The NOTARY.

O THERE he is! Good morrow t'ye: I'm ready to draw up the contract as you desire.

Arnolph not seeing or hearing him.] How must it be done?

The Notary. It must be in the usual form.

Arnolph not seeing him.] I'll use the utmost precaution possible.

The Notary. I'll do nothing contrary to your interest.

Arnolph not seeing him.] I must guard against any surprise.

The Notary. 'Tis enough that your affairs are put into my hands. You must by no means sign the contract before you receive the portion, for fear of being cheated.

Arnolph not seeing him.] I'm afraid, should I make any discovery, 'twould become a public town-talk.

The Notary. But it is mighty easy to prevent a discovery; your contract may be transacted privately.

Arnolph not seeing him.] But how shall I settle the point with her?

The Notary. The jointure should be in proportion to the fortune she brings you.

Arnolph not seeing him.] I love her, and that love is the great difficulty I labour under.

The Notary. In that case the wife may have so much the more.

Arnolph not seeing him.] How to behave to her on such an occasion?

The Notary. The law says, the husband that is to be shall settle upon the wife—that is to be the third part of her portion; but the law signifies nothing at all, you may do a great deal more than that if you've a mind to it.

Arnolph not seeing him.] If———

[Perceiving the Notary.

The Notary. As for the presents to be made, let them agree together. I say the husband that is to be may jointure the wife that is to be just as he thinks fit.

Arnolph. Heh!

The Notary. He may give her so much and more, if he loves her greatly, and is desirous to oblige her, and that by way of jointure or settlement as they call it, to be lost and go away intirely to the right heirs of the said wife that is to be, upon her decease; or else according to the statute, as people have a mind; or as a gift, by a deed in form which may be made either single or mutual. Wherefore do you shrug? talk I like a fool, or don't I understand the manner of a contract? Who is it can teach me? No body, I presume. Don't I know that when they are marry'd they have in law an equal right to all movables, monies, immovables, and acquisitions, unless they give it up by an act of renunciation? Don't I know that a third part of the portion of the wife that is to be, becomes in common, for———

Arnolph. Ay, to be sure you know all this; but who says one word t'ye about it?

The Notary. You, who seem to take me for a fool, by shrugging up your shoulders, and making faces at me.

Arnolph.

Arnolph. Plague take the fellow with his puppy's face. Fare you well; that's the way to make you have done.

The Notary. Was not I fetch'd hither to draw up a contract?

Arnolph. Yes, I sent for you; but the affair is put off, and I'll send for you again when the time is fix'd. What a devil of a fellow this is with his jabbering!

The Notary alone.] I think he's mad, and I believe I think right too.

SCENE III.

The NOTARY, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

THE NOTARY.

DID not you come to fetch me to your master?

Allen. Yes.

The Notary. I don't know what you may take him for, but go and tell him from me, that he's an arrant fool.

Georgetta. We won't fail to do it.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ALLEN.

SIR —————

Arnolph. Come hither, you are my faithful, my good, my real friends, and I've some news for you.

VOL. II.

E

Allen. The Notary ———

Arnolph. No matter, some other time for that. A wicked design is contriv'd against my honour; and what a disgrace would it be for you, children, to have your master's honour taken from him? After that you'd not dare appear in any place, for whoever sees you would point at you. Therefore, since the affair concerns you as much as me, you must take such care, for your part, that this spark may not in any manner ———

Georgetta. You've taught us our lesson already.

Arnolph. But beware of listning to his fair speeches,

Allen. O! to be sure. ———

Georgetta. We know how to deny him.

Arnolph. Suppose he should come now in a wheedling manner; Allen, my dear heart, cheer up my drooping spirits by a little of your assistance.

Allen. You're a fool.

Arnolph. Right. [To Georgetta.] Georgetta, my pretty-face, you seem so sweet-temper'd, and so good a body.

Georgetta. You're an oaf.

Arnolph. Right. [To Allen.] What harm is there, d'ye think, in an honest and virtuous design?

Allen. You're a rogue.

Arnolph. Mighty well. [To Georgetta.] I shall certainly die, if you take no pity on the pains I suffer.

Georgetta. You're a blockhead, an impudent fellow.

Arnolph. Very good. [To Allen.] I'm not a person that desires something for nothing; I know how to remember services that are done me: However, Allen, there's somewhat to make you drink before-hand; and there's to buy you an under-petticoat, Georgetta. [Both hold out their hands and take the money.] This is only

an earnest of my kindness; and all the favour I request of you is only to let me see your pretty mistress.

Georgetta pushing him.] None o' your tricks upon us.

Arnolph. That's good.

Allen pushing him.] Get you gone.

Arnolph. Right.

Georgetta pushing him.] This moment.

Arnolph. Very well. Hold, enough.

Georgetta. Don't I do right?

Allen. Is this the way you'd have us behave to him?

Arnolph. Yes, it's mighty well, except as to the money, which you mustn't take.

Georgetta. We didn't think o' that.

Allen. Wou'd you have us begin again just now?

Arnolph. No; 'tis enough, go in both of you.

Allen. You need only speak.

Arnolph. No, I tell you, go in when I desire you. You may keep the money; go, I'll come to you again; have an eye to every thing, and second my endeavours.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPH alone.

I'LL get the cobbler at the corner of our street to be a spy for me; I design to keep her always within doors, set a good guard upon her, and above all banish your sellers of ribbons, tire-women, milliners, handkerchief-makers, glove-washers, and friperies-women, all those gentry who make it their daily business to help on your love-intrigues. In short, I've seen the world, and understand the tricks of it, and my spark shall be migh-

ty cunning if he get admittance for either letter or message.

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH,

HORACE.

IT'S happy for me to meet you here; I had a very fair escape e'en now, I assure you. As I went from you, I saw Agnes unexpectedly in the balcony all alone, enjoying the cool breezes from the trees just by. After having made me a sign, she found means some way or other to get down into the garden, and open me the door. But we were scarce both of us in her chamber, before she heard her jealous-pate upon the stairs; and all she possibly could do at such a pinch, was to lock me up in a large press for clothes. He came into the room immediately: I didn't see him, but I heard him walk to and fro' at a great rate, without speaking a word, but sighing grievously now and then, and sometimes giving great thumps upon the table, striking a little dog that fawn'd upon him, and flinging about in a mad manner whatever came in his way; he broke in his passion the very flower-pots with which the fair one had set out her chimney; and without doubt the trick she has play'd must have come to the ear of this cuckold in embryo. At last, after having by twenty such tricks discharg'd his fury on things that could not help it, my jealous, restless gentleman, without saying what disturb'd him, left the chamber, and I my press. We were unwilling to venture staying together any longer for fear of some-

body, 'twould have been running too great a risque: But to night when it's late I'm to get into her chamber without making any noise; the sign for her to know me is to be three hems, and then the window will be open'd, at which, by a ladder and the assistance of Agnes, love will try to gain admittance for me. This I tell to you as my only friend: Joy increases by being reveal'd; and should one taste the utmost happiness an hundred times over, 'twould not be satisfactory unless 'twere known by some-body. You'll take part, I believe, in the success of my affairs. Adieu, I'm going to take care of what is necessary.

S C E N E VII.

ARNOLPH alone.

WHAT, will my persecuting stars allow me no time to breathe? Blow after blow! Am I fated by them to find all my wisdom and vigilance defeated? And shall I in the meridian of my life be made a fool of by a simple girl, and a shatterbrain'd young fellow? For twenty years past, like a discreet philosopher, I've been contemplating the unhappy destiny of marry'd men, and have carefully inform'd myself of all the accidents which plunge the most prudent into misfortune: pondering in my own mind, and profiting by the disgraces of others, (it being my intent to marry) I have endeavour'd to find the way of securing my brows from all affronts, and prevent their matching with other foreheads: For this noble purpose I imagin'd I had put in practice whatever human policy could invent, but as if it was decreed by fate that no man on earth should be exempted from

it, after all the light and experience that I could possibly gain in these matters, after more than twenty years studying how to conduct myself warily thro' the whole affair, have I acted contrary to the practice of so many husbands, to find myself involv'd in the very same disgrace at last? Ah! cruel destiny, thou art a liar! I'm still in possession of the desir'd object; and if her heart is stolen from me by this unlucky spark, I'll prevent him however from seizing any thing else, and to-night, which they intend for this piece of galantry, shall not be spent so agreeably as they imagine. It's some pleasure to me, amidst so much uneasiness, that I've notice of the snare prepar'd for me, and that this blunderer who would be fatal to me, makes his own rival his confident.

S C E N E VIII.

CHRISALDUS, ARNOLPH.

CHRISALDUS.

WELL, shall we sup before we walk?

Arnolph. No, I fast to-night.

Chrisaldus. Whence comes this whim?

Arnolph. Pray now excuse me, I've something else that hinders me.

Chrisaldus. Is n't the wedding you resolv'd upon to be perform'd?

Arnolph. That's troubling yourself too much with other people's business.

Chrisaldus. O ho, so snappish! What is't disturbs you? Have you met with any little misfortune in love,

my friend? By your countenance I'd almost swear you have.

Arnolph. Let what will befall me, I shall at least have the advantage of being unlike certain people, who quietly suffer galants to make their visits.

Chrisaldus. It's a strange thing, that with so much discernment, you should always take fright upon this affair, that you should place your sovereign happiness in this, and imagine no other kind of honour in the world: To be a miser, a brute, a villain, a bully, and coward is nothing in your opinion, compar'd with this blot; and in whatsoever manner a man may have lived, he is a man of honour if he's not a cuckold. To come closer to the purpose, why will you suppose that all our glory depends on such an accident? And that a virtuous mind has any thing to reproach it self for the injustice of a vicious one which it could not help? Why will you, I say, imagine that in taking a wife one deserves either praise or blame for the choice one makes, and form a most horrible monster of the affront that is done one by her falsehood? Be persuaded that a man of honour may have a less frightful notion of cuckoldom; that none being secure from the strokes of fortune, this accident should be thought in itself indifferent; and in short, that all the harm of it, let the world pretend what it will, lies only in the manner of our bearing it. To behave well under these difficulties, one must, as well as in all others, avoid extremes: not be like those over-good natur'd people, who, proud of such affairs, are inviting their wives galants continually, praising 'em in all places, and crying up their good qualities; who appear exactly of their humour, come to all their treats and meetings, and give every body reason to wonder at their having

the assurance to shew their faces there. This way of acting is certainly highly blameable, but t'other extreme is no less to be condemned. As I don't approve of such as are friends to their wives galants, I am no more for those violent people whose indiscreet resentment full of rage and fury, draws the eyes of all the world upon them by its noise, and who, by the bustle they make, appear unwilling that any body should be ignorant what they are. There's a medium between these two extremes, where a wise man stops upon such an occasion: when a body knows how to take it, there's no cause to be ashamed for the worst a wife can do. In short, whatever people say of it, cuckoldom may be easily made to appear less frightful, and as I told you before, all the dexterity lies in knowing how to turn the fair side outwards.

Arnolph. After this fine harangue, the whole fraternity ought to thank your worship, and any body that hears you speak must rejoice to find himself enroll'd amongst the number.

Chrisaldus. I don't say that, for 'tis what I blame: but as a wife is the gift of fortune, one should do, I say, as at dice, where if what you expect don't come up, you must make use of dexterity and temper to amend your luck by good conduct.

Arnolph. That is to say, always eat and sleep quietly, and persuade yourself it signifies just nothing.

Chrisaldus. You think to make a jest on't: but to deal sincerely with you, I know an hundred things in the world that are to be dreaded more, and which I shou'd think a much greater misfortune than the accident you're so terribly afraid of. Do you imagine, was I forc'd to make my choice, that I shou'dn't rather like to be what you say, than to be marry'd to one of those good wo-

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 105

men whose perverseness makes a quarrel out of nothing: those dragons of virtue, those honest she-devils, who pique themselves continually upon their wife conduct, who, because they don't do us a slight injury, take upon 'em to behave haughtily, and expect for their being true to us, that we shou'd bear every thing from 'em. Once more, friend, let me tell you, that cuckoldom is really nothing but what one makes it, that it may be even wish'd for on some accounts, and that it has its pleasures as well as other things.

Arnolph. If you're of a temper to be contented under it, I've no mind to try it for my part, and rather than submit to such a thing——

Chrisaldus. Bless me, don't swear for fear of being perjur'd. If fate ordains it so, your precautions are all to no purpose; your advice will not be taken about the matter.

Arnolph. Shall I be a cuckold?

Chrisaldus. You are grievously hurt: A thousand people are so, without disparagement to you, who for person, courage, wealth, and family, would think it an affront to be compar'd with you,

Arnolph. For my part, I shall make no comparisons with them. But, in one word, this raillery is troublesome; let's ha' done with it, if you please.

Chrisaldus. You're in a passion; we shall find out the cause of it. Fare you well: but, remember, whatever your honour may make you imagine as to this affair, that it is being half what we were talking of, to swear you will not be so.

Arnolph. Again, I swear it, and am going this instant to find out a good remedy against that accident.

[Running to knock at his door.

SCENE IX.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

MY friends, now's the time that I implore your assistance. I'm satisfy'd of your love for me: but it must be shewn on this occasion; and if you serve me, as I assure myself you will, you may be certain of a reward. The man you know of (but not a word) intends, as I understand, to trick me this very night, and get by a ladder into Agnes's chamber. But we three must lay a trap for him. I'd have each of you take a good cudgel, and when he's almost at the top round of the ladder, (for I'll open the window in the nick of time) both of you fall upon the rascal for me, in such a manner that his back may be sure to remember it, and teach him to come there no more. However, don't mention me at all, nor make any appearance of my being behind. Will you have the courage to execute my resentment?

Allen. If he's only to be thrash'd, Sir, depend upon us, you shall see whether I strike with a dead man's arm or not.

Georgetta. Tho' mine seems not so strong, it shall play its part in drubbing him.

Arnolph. Go you in then, and above all things, be careful not to tattle. [alone.] This is a useful lesson for my neighbour, and if all the husbands in this town were to receive their wives galants in the same manner, the number of cuckolds would not be so great.

ACT V. SCENE I.

ARNOLPH, ALLEN, GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH.

WRETCHES, what have you done by your violence?

Allen. Sir, we've obey'd you.

Arnolph. You endeavour in vain to make that your excuse, you were order'd to beat and not to murder him: 'twas his back and not his head that I commanded you to discharge the blows upon. Heavens! into what a condition has fortune now brought me! what can I think of doing, to see the man dead? Get into the house, and be sure you say not a word of the innocent order I gave you. [alone.] 'Twill be day-light presently, and I'll go ask advice how I must conduct myself under this misfortune. Alas! what will become of me? And what will the father say, when he comes to be inform'd of this unexpected accident?

SCENE II.

ARNOLPH, HORACE.

HORACE aside.

I MUST go inquire a little who it is.

Arnolph thinking himself alone.] Could one ever have foreseen—[being run against by Horace.] Who's there? pray.

Horace. Is it you Mr. Arnolph?

Arnolph. Yes, but who are you?—

Horace. Horace; I was going to your house to beg a favour of you. You're abroad very early.

Arnolph *low aside.*] Surprizing! Is it an enchantment? Is it a vision?

Horace. To say the truth, I have been in abundance of trouble, and I thank heaven's great goodness for meeting you here thus luckily. I'm going to tell you how every thing has succeeded even much better than I durst have promis'd, and that too by an accident which might have ruin'd all. I don't know how the assignation we had made could possibly come to be suspected; but just as I was got to the window I saw some people appear contrary to my expectation, who striking furiously at me, made me miss my step and tumble to the very ground: which fall, at the expence of a bruise, sav'd me from a hearty drubbing. These people, (amongst whom my jealous-pate, I suppose, was one) imagin'd my fall to be occasion'd by the force of their blows; and as my pain made me lie a good while motionless on the spot, they believ'd verily that they had knock'd me o' the head; which immediately alarm'd 'em all. I heard their noise with a profound silence; they accus'd one another of the violence, and complaining of their hard fate, came softly, without any light, to feel if I was dead. I leave you to guess whether or no in the night I could not put on the appearance of a real dead body. They went away very much terrify'd: and as I was considering how to get off, young Agnes, whom my pretended death had frighted, came to me in great concern: (For she had heard what the people said to one another, and being less observ'd during all this bustle, she easily slip'd out of the house.) But finding I was not hurt, she ap-

pear'd in a transport hardly to be express'd. What shall I say more t'ye? At last this charming creature has follow'd the dictates of her love, and being unwilling to go home any more, has committed herself intirely to my trust. You may find a little by this harmless proceeding, how much the gross impertinence of a fool exposes her, and what a dreadful risque she might have run had I a less sincere regard for her; but my heart burns with too pure a flame, and I would rather die than injure her. I see charms in her which deserve a better fate, and nothing but death shall part us. I foresee my father's anger, but we shall find a time to appease his wrath. I yield to her tender charms, and in short, we must please our selves in life: The favour, therefore, I would beg of you, (relying on your secrecy and sincerity,) is, that I may put this beauty into your hands, and that you'll so far assist my passion, as to conceal her in your house for a day or two at least. For, besides, that her going off should be kept from every body to prevent any certain pursuit after her, you are sensible that a girl of her beauty would be strangely suspected in the company of a young man; and as I have trusted you with the whole secret of my passion, being well assur'd of your prudence, so to you only, as a generous friend, can I commit this belov'd treasure.

Arnolph. I am, you need make no doubt, intirely at your service.

Horace. And will you do me this kind office?

Arnolph. Very readily, I assure you; I'm overjoy'd at this opportunity of serving you, and thank heaven for giving it me. I never did any thing with so much pleasure.

Horace. How much am I oblig'd to you for your

goodness! I was afraid you'd make a difficulty of doing it; but you understand the world, and your wisdom can excuse the heat of youth. One of my servants waits with her at the corner of that turning.

Arnolph. But how shall we manage? for the day begins to break. If I take her here, perhaps I shall be seen, and if you should come to my house the servants will tattle. To act the safest way, she must be brought to me in some place that's darker. That alley of mine is convenient, I'll go wait for her there.

Horace. 'Tis very right to use these precautions; for my part, I shall do no more than put her into your hands, and then get me home immediately without saying any thing.

Arnolph alone.] Ah, fortune! This propitious accident makes amends for all the mischief thy caprice has done me. [Throws his cloke over his face.

SCENE III.

AGNES, HORACE, ARNOLPH.

HORACE to Agnes.

DON'T be uneasy about the place I'm carrying you to, 'tis a lodging you'll be very safe in; 'twould ruin all for you to be with me. Go in at this door, and be conducted.

[Arnolph takes her hand without her knowing him.]

Agnes to Horace.] Wherefore do you leave me?

Horace. Dear Agnes, it must be so.

Agnes. Remember then, pray now, to come back speedily.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. III

Horace. My passion urges me to that sufficiently.

Agnes. I feel no joy but when you're in my sight.

Horace. When from your presence I'm melancholy likewise.

Agnes. Alack! you'd stay here, if that was true.

Horace. What! can you doubt of my excessive love?

Agnes. Nay, you don't love me so much as I love you, [Arnolph pulls her.] Oh! you pull me too hard.

Horace. Dear Agnes, that's because 'tis dangerous for us two to be seen here; and this true friend who pulls you so, is prudently zealous for our service.

Agnes. But to follow a stranger, who ———

Horace. Don't fear any thing, you cannot but be well in such hands.

Agnes. I should think myself much better in Horace's; and I shou'd — [To Arnolph who pulls her again.] Stay a little.

Horace. Fare you well. The day drives me away.

Agnes. When shall I see you then?

Horace. Very soon, you may be sure.

Agnes. How uneasy I shall be till that time comes!

Horace. Heaven be thanked, my happiness is no longer in suspense, and now I may sleep securely.

SCENE IV.

ARNOLPH, AGNES.

ARNOLPH conceal'd under his cloke, and disguising his voice.

COME along, I shan't let you lodge here: I've prepar'd an apartment elsewhere for you, and intend to

place you where you may be safe enough, [Discovering himself.] D'ye know me?

Agnes knowing him.] Hah!

Arnolph. The sight of me frightens you on this occasion, huffy; and 'tis much against your will to find me here: I interrupt the love contrivances you've in your head. [Agnes looks if she can't see Horace.] Don't imagine your eyes can call back your spark to help you, he's gone too far to give you any assistance. Ha, ha, so young, and yet to play these pranks! Your extraordinary seeming ignorance enquir'd if children were produc'd at the ear, tho' you know well enough how to make assignations by night, and can steal away very silently to run after a galant. Odsbobs, how slipper your tongue was with him! sure you must have been at some rare school: Who the deuce has taught you all this so suddenly? You're no longer it seems afraid of sprights? This galant has given you courage in the night-time. Ah! baggage, to arrive at this deceit! to form such a design, notwithstanding all my kindness: Thou'rt a little serpent that I've warm'd in my bosom, which when it comes to its feeling, ungratefully tries to mischief him that cherish'd it.

Agnes. Why d'ye scold at me?

Arnolph. I'm much in the wrong truly.

Agnes. I don't know any harm in all this that I've done.

Arnolph. Isn't running after a galant a scandalous action?

Agnes. 'Tis a man that says he'll marry me. I follow'd your directions; for you told me one must marry to take away the guilt.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 113

Arnolph. Ay, but I intended to marry you myself, and methinks I let you know my meaning plain enough.

Agnes. Yes, but to tell you freely between you and I, he's more according to my liking for a husband than you are, matrimony with you is a troublesome uneasy thing, and you give a terrible description of it; but a-lack-a-day! he represents it so brimful of pleasures, that it makes one have a mind to be marry'd.

Arnolph. Ah! Traiteurs? that's because you love him.

Agnes. I do love him indeed.

Arnolph. And have you the impudence to tell me so?

Agnes. Why if it's true, mayn't I say so?

Arnolph. Ought you to love him, impertinence?

Agnes. Lack-a-day! can I help it? He only is the cause on't; I didn't think of it 'till it was over.

Arnolph. But you shou'd have discarded that amorous desire.

Agnes. How can a body discard what is agreeable.

Arnolph. And don't you know that it displeases me?

Agnes. Not at all: What harm can it do you?

Arnolph. Very true, I've reason to rejoice at it. You don't love me then at this rate.

Agnes. You!

Arnolph. Ay.

Agnes. Alack! no.

Arnolph. How! no.

Agnes. Wou'd you ha' me tell a lye?

Arnolph. Why don't you love me, madam impudence?

Agnes. Lack-a-day, you shou'dn't blame me: Why didn't you make yourself belov'd as he did? I didn't hinder you from it that I know of.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Arnolph. I endeavour'd it all I could, but my pains were to no purpose.

Agnes. Then he understands it better than you do, for he made me love him without any pains at all.

Arnolph aside.] Observe how the jade answers and argues! Plague! could one of your witty ladies have said more? Ah! I did not well know her, or else, by my faith, in these cases a simple woman understands more than the wisest man. [To Agnes.] Since you're so good at reasoning, Mrs Chop-Logick, is there any reason why I should maintain you so long a time at my own charge for him?

Agnes. No, he'll repay you all, even to the last farthing.

Arnolph aside.] She hits upon certain words which give me double vexation. [To Agnes.] Is it in his power, hussy, to repay me the obligations you have to me?

Agnes. I have no such great ones as you think.

Arnolph. Is it nothing to take care of your education from your infancy?

Agnes. You've been at great pains about that matter truly, and have caus'd me to be bravely instructed in every thing. D'ye imagine I flatter myself so far as not to know in my own mind that I'm intirely ignorant? I'm asham'd on't myself, and at this age won't pass any longer for a fool, if I can help it.

Arnolph. You hate ignorance, and are resolv'd, whatever it costs, to learn something of your spark.

Agnes. To be sure. 'Tis of him that I know what I do know, and I think myself more oblig'd to him than you.

Arnolph. I can't tell what should hinder me from

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 115

revenging this saucy language with my fist. I'm distract-
ed at the sight of her provoking coldness, and beating
her would be a satisfaction to me.

Agnes. Lack-a-day! you may do it if that would
please you.

Arnolph aside.] That speech and that look disarm my
fury, and produce a return of tenderness which effaces
all her guilt. How strange is it to be in love! and that
men should be subject to such weakness for these traitresses!
Every body knows their imperfection; they're nothing
but extravagance and indiscretion; their mind is wicked
and their understanding weak; nothing is more frail;
nothing more unsteady, nothing more false, and yet for
all that one does every thing in the world for the sake
of these animals. [To Agnes.] Well, let us make peace:
Go, thou little traitress, I forgive thee all, and now am
fond of thee again: Learn by this how much I love thee,
and seeing I'm so good, love thou me in return.

Agnes. I'd oblige you at any rate, with all my heart,
if 'twas in my power.

Arnolph. My dear life, thou canst if thou wou'dst.
Do but hear that amorous sigh, behold this dying look,
contemplate my person, and ha' done with this young
coxcomb, and the love he offers thee. He must certainly
have put some spell upon thee, and thou'lt be a hun-
dred times more happy with me. Thy strong passion is
to be fine and gay, and I protest thou shalt always be so.
I shall be fondling thee continually both night and day;
I shall hug thee, and kiss thee, and eat thee up. Thou
shalt do every thing thou hast a mind to; which is say-
ing all that can be said without coming to particulars.
[Aside.] How far will my passion go? [Aloud.] Nothing
really can be equal to my love. What proof of it

would'st thou have me give thee, ungrateful girl? Would'st thou behold me weep? Would'st thou have me beat myself? Would'st thou have me tear off half my hair? Would'st thou have me kill myself? Ay; say if thou would have me do it, I'm intirely ready, cruel creature, to convince thee of my love.

Agnes. Hold; all your talking does not touch my heart; Horace with two words would have wrought upon it more than you.

Arnolph. Heh! this is too great an insult, provoking my rage too far: I'll pursue my design, you untractable brute, and pack you out of town immediately. You reject my addresses and drive me to extremity, but a convent shall be my revenge for all.

SCENE V.

ARNOLPH, AGNES, ALLEN.

ALLEN.

I DON'T know how 'tis, Sir, but methought Agnes and the dead corps went away together.

Arnolph. Here she is: Go shut her up in my chamber. [Aside.] He won't come there to seek her. Besides, it's only for half an hour. I'll go get a coach, that I may put her in a securer place. Fasten your selves in well, and be sure don't let her be out o' sight. [Alone.] When she is once in the country she may perhaps be undeceived as to this love-business.

SCENE VI.

HORACE, ARNOLPH.

HORACE.

O! I'M come to find you, quite overwhelm'd with sorrow: Heaven, Mr. Arnolph, has decreed my ill-fortune; and by a fatal stroke of extreme injustice they would tear from me the fair one whom I love. My father is just arriv'd, I found him alighted at an inn hard by, and in short, the reason of his coming, which I told you before I did not know, is, that he has made a match for me without writing me one word about it, and is come to this place to celebrate the nuptials. Judge you, by the part you bear in my uneasiness, whether a more shocking disappointment cou'd have befallen me. That Henriques, whom I ask'd you about yesterday, is the cause of all my misfortune; he's come along with my father to complete my ruin, and 'tis his only daughter for whom I'm destin'd. I thought I shou'd have swooned when first they spoke of it, and not caring to hear any more on't, (as my father talk'd of paying you a visit) I hasted hither before-hand, with a mind full of consternation. I beseech you take care not to let him know any thing of my engagement, which might incense him; and as he puts a great confidence in you, pray now endeavour to dissuade him from this other match.

Arnolph. Ay, ay.

Horace. Advise him to put it off a little, and as a friend, assist my passion in this particular.

Arnolph. I won't fail of doing it.

118 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

Horace. My hopes are all in you.

Arnolph. Very well.

Horace. I look upon you as my real father. Tell him that my age—Ah! I see him coming; hear the reasons I can furnish you with.

S C E N E VII.

HENRIQUES, ORONTES, CHRISALDUS,
HORACE, ARNOLPH.

Horace and Arnolph retire to a corner of the stage, and whisper.

HENRIQUES to Chrisaldus.

AS soon as ever I saw you, tho' I hadn't been told, I should have known you: I recollected the features of your lovely sister, whom marriage once made mine; happy should I have been had cruel destiny permitted me to bring back that faithful wife, to enjoy with me the sensible delight of seeing again all her relations after our long misfortunes. But since the irresistible power of fate has depriv'd us for ever of her dear company, let us endeavour and resolve to be contented with the only fruit that remains of our loves. It concerns you nearly; and without your consent I should do wrong to dispose of this pledge. The choice of the son of Orontes is in itself honourable, but you must be pleas'd in this choice as well as I.

Chrisaldus. 'Tis having a bad opinion of my judgment, to doubt my approbation of so reasonable a choice.

Arnolph aside to Horace.] Ay, I'll serve you in the best manner.

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES. 119

[Horace aside to Arnolph.] But beware of one thing—

Arnolph to Horace.] Be under no concern.

[Arnolph quits Horace to embrace Orontes.

Orontes to Arnolph.] O! how full of tenderness is this embrace!

Arnolph. How much I rejoice to see you!

Orontes. I'm come hither ———

Arnolph. I know what brings you, without your telling me.

Orontes. Have you been inform'd already?

Arnolph. Yes.

Orontes. So much the better.

Arnolph. Your son opposes this match, and his heart being pre-engag'd looks upon it as a misfortune: He even desired me to dissuade you from it; and for my part, all the advice I can give you is to exert the authority of a father, and not let the wedding be deferr'd. Young people should be govern'd with an high hand, we do 'em harm by being indulgent to 'em.

Horace aside.] Oh! Traitor!

Chrisaldus. If it's against his inclination, I think we should not force him. My brother, I believe, will be of my opinion.

Arnolph. What! will he suffer himself to be govern'd by his son? Wou'd you have a father be so weak as not to know how to make youth obey him? 'Twould really be mighty fine to see him at this time of life receiving laws from one who ought to receive 'em of him. No, no, he's my intimate friend, and his honour is mine, his promise is given, and he must perform it. Let him now shew his resolution, and force his son's affections.

Orontes. You say right, and to what regards this match, I'll be answerable for my son's obedience.

Chrisaldus to Arnolph.] For my part, I'm surpriz'd at the great eagerness you shew for this match, and can't conceive what motive inspires you ———

Arnolph. I know what I know, and speak what I ought to speak.

Orontes. Ay, ay, Mr. Arnolph, he's ———

Chrisaldus. That name displeases him; 'tis Mr. de la Souch, as you've been told already.

Arnolph. It's no matter.

Horace aside.] What is this I hear?

Arnolph turning towards Horace.] Ay, there lies the secret, and you may judge what I ought to do.

Horace aside.] Into what uneasiness ———

S C E N E VIII.

HENRIQUES, ORONTES, CHRISALDUS,
HORACE, ARNOLPH, GEORGETTA.

GEORGETTA.

SIR, if you don't come, we shall have much ado to keep Agnes; she'll run all hazards to get away, and will perhaps fling herself out at window.

Arnolph. Bring her to me, for I intend to take her away from hence immediately. [To Horace.] Don't you be troubled at it, continual good fortune would make a man proud, and every one in his turn, as the proverb says.

Horace. O heaven! What misfortunes can equal mine! and was ever any body plung'd in such an abyss as I am!

Arnolph to Orontes.] Hasten the day of the ceremony,

remony, I desire it may be so, and invite myself to it already.

Orontes. That really is my design.

SCENE IX.

AGNES, ORONTES, HENRIQUES, ARNOLPH,
HORACE, CHRISALDUS, ALLEN,
GEORGETTA.

ARNOLPH to Agnes.

COME hither, pretty face, come hither, you who are headstrong and can't be manag'd; here's your spark, to whom, as an amends, you may make an humble and obliging curtsy. [To Horace.] Fare you well. The event is a little contrary to your wishes, but all lovers are not fortunate.

Agnes. D'ye let me be carry'd away in this manner, Horace?

Horace. My affliction is so great I know not where I am.

Arnolph. Come along, with your tittle-tattle, come along.

Agnes. I'll stay here.

Orontes. Explain to us this mystery; we stare one at another without being able to comprehend it.

Arnolph. I'll tell you at a more convenient time. Your servant.

Orontes. And whither d'ye mean to go? You don't tell us what we want you shou'd tell us.

Arnolph. I have advis'd you, in spite of his murmuring, to conclude the match.

Orontes. Yes, but in order to conclude it, (if you were told all,) were you not inform'd that she we mean is in your house, and that she's the daughter of the lovely Angelica, which she had privately by Mr. Henriques? What could be the reason of your talk just now?

Chrifaldus. I was likewise surpriz'd to see his behaviour.

Arnolph. What?

Chrifaldus. My sister, by a private marriage, had one daughter, who was conceal'd from the whole family.

Orontes. And under feign'd names, to prevent discovery, was by her husband put out to nurse in the country.

Chrifaldus. At which time, fortune being his foe, he was forc'd to leave his native land.

Orontes. And to undergo a thousand different dangers in places beyond sea.

Chrifaldus. Where his industry has acquir'd what envy and roguery tore from him in his own country.

Orontes. At his return into France he immediately sought after her whom he had intrusted with the care of his daughter.

Chrifaldus. And the countrywoman told him plainly, that at four years old she had put her into your hands.

Orontes. That she did so on account of your charity, being herself oppress'd with extreme poverty.

Chrifaldus. And he, full of transport and satisfaction, has even brought the woman hither.

Orontes. In short, you'll see her come here presently to clear up this mystery to every body.

Chrifaldus to Arnolph.] I guess pretty nearly what a punishment this must be to you. But fate is kind to you in the affair; since to be no cuckold seems to you

so great an happiness, the certain way of attaining it is for you not to marry.

Arnolph going away in a violent passion, and unable to speak.

Oh!

SCENE THE LAST.

HENRIQUES, ORONTES, CHRISALDUS, AGNES,
HORACE.

ORONTES.

HOW comes it he runs away without saying any thing?

Horace. Ah, father! you shall know the whole of this surprizing mystery. Accident has here brought to pass the same thing which your prudence intended; to this fair creature I was engaged strictly by the endearing ties of mutual love. She's the very person you came to seek after, and my refusal for her sake I imagin'd would have anger'd you.

Henriques. I made no doubt of it from the moment I saw her, and my heart has yearn'd after her ever since. Ah, my daughter! I yield to such tender transports.

Chrisaldus. I could do so with all my heart, brother, as well as you; but this is not a proper place for it; let us go into the house to clear up these mysteries, to discharge the obligations we owe our friend, and give thanks to heaven which orders all things for the best.

THE END.

F 2

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES

I want to say that the current way of thinking is to
let the girl be free.
And the girl is a good girl, and simple
and good.
180

SCENE THE LAST

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES
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SCHOOL FOR WIVES.

CRITICIS' D.

A

COMEDY.

F 3

A C T O R S.

URANIA.

ELIZA.

CLIMENE.

THE MARQUIS.

DORANTES, or the KNIGHT.

LYSIDAS, a poet.

GALOPIN, a lacquey.



SCENE PARIS, in the house of Urania.

...the great number of foolish virgins one must endure amongst
your other lots, is very often the reason why I take
pleasure in being alone.

THE
SCHOOL FOR WIVES
CRITICIS'D.

...in such the conversation don't go far with
not wearying you, and the greatest part of these sort of
people are no more worth your notice than I am. But
to the subject of your extravagance, won't you tell me
of your impudent behaviour? I always think always to
leave him upon my hands, and that I can hold out a

SCENE I.

URANIA, ELIZA.

URANIA.

WHAT, cousin, is no body come to visit you?
Eliza. Not a soul.
Urania. I am astonish'd truly, that we have
both of us been alone this whole day.
Eliza. It astonishes me too; for 'tis by no means our
custom, and your house, thank heaven, is the ordinary
refuge of all the saunterers about court.
Urania. The afternoon, to say the truth, seems long
to me.
Eliza. And I think it very short.
Urania. That's because your fine wits, cousin, love a
solitude.
Eliza. O! your fine wits most obedient; you know
I don't aim at that.

Urania. For my part, I confess, I love company.

Eliza. So do I too; but I love select company, and the great number of foolish visits one must endure amongst your other sorts, is very often the reason why I take pleasure in being alone.

Urania. 'Tis too great delicacy, not to be able to bear any but your choice people.

Eliza. And the complaisance is too general to bear indifferently all sorts of people.

Urania. I relish those who are reasonable, and divert myself with the extravagant.

Eliza. In truth, the extravagant don't go far without wearying you, and the greatest part of these sort of people are no more diverting after the second visit. But to the business of your extravagants, won't you rid me of your impertinent Marquis? D'ye think always to leave him upon my hands, and that I can hold out against his perpetual puns?

Urania. This is a fashionable language, and they make themselves merry with it at court.

Eliza. So much the worse for those who do so, and who rack their brains all day long to talk this obscure jargon. A pretty thing to bring into the conversation of the Louvre, your double entendres, rak'd together from the kennels of *Halles* and *Place Maubert*! A fine manner of jesting for courtiers, and of a man's shewing his wit by coming and saying: Madam, you are at the *place royal*, and all the world sees you three leagues from Paris; for every body sees you with a good eye; because Boneuil is a village at three leagues distant from hence! Is it not very galant, and very witty? And han't they who hit upon these pretty puns, reason to be proud of 'em?

Urania. They don't, at the same time, speak this as

a piece of wit, for most of those who affect this language know that 'tis ridiculous.

Eliza. Worse still, to take pains to say silly things, and to be sorry jokers on set purpose. I hold 'em less excusable for that, and were I judge, I very well know to what I shou'd condemn all these gentry the punsters.

Urania. Let us have done with this affair, it heats ye a little too much; and let us talk of Dorantes, he's long a coming, methinks, to the supper we're to have together.

Eliza. Perhaps he has forgot it, and —

SCENE II.

GALOPIN, URANIA, ELIZA.

GALOPIN.

MADAM, here's Climene come to see you.

Urania. Oh! bless me! what a visit is this!

Eliza. You complain of being alone; so heaven punishes you for it.

Urania. Quick, go tell her I'm not at home.

Galopin. She is told already that you are.

Urania. And who's the fool that told her so?

Galopin. I, madam.

Urania. Deuce take the little rascal; I shall teach you to give answers of your own head.

Galopin. I'll go tell her, madam, that you won't be at home.

Urania. Stay, ye little ass, and let her come up, since the folly is committed.

Galopin. She's still talking to a man in the street.

Urania. Ah! cousin, how does this visit perplex me at this time!

Eliza. 'Tis true, the woman is naturally troublesome: I always had a furious aversion to her; and, no offence to her quality, she's one of the most stupid asses, that ever pretended to reason.

Urania. The epithet is a little of the strongest.

Eliza. Come, come, she richly deserves it, and something more, if one were to do her justice. Is there a creature more truly, what we call a piece of affectation, than she is, taking the word in the worst signification of it?

Urania. She scorns the name, for all that.

Eliza. True, she scorns the name; but not the thing: for in short she has it from head to foot, and is the most formal piece in the world: her whole body seems as 'twere out of joint, and as if the motion of her hips, her shoulders and her head went all by clock-work. She always affects a languishing silly tone of voice; makes faces to make her mouth appear little; and rolls her eyes, to make 'em look large.

Urania. Softly then. If she shou'd happen to overhear —

Eliza. No, no, she's not a coming up yet. I shall never forget the evening that she was desirous of seeing Damon, on account of the reputation he has, and the things of his that he had publish'd. You know the man, and his natural indolence in keeping up a conversation. She had invited him to supper, as a wit, and never did he appear so much a fool, among half a dozen people whom she design'd him as an entertainment for, and who star'd upon him, as if he ought not to be made like other men. They all thought he was there to regale the com-

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES: CRITICIS'D. 117

pany with his jests; that every word he spoke was to be extraordinary, that he was to make extemporary repartees upon every thing that was said, and not call for a glass of wine, but with a witticism. But he deceiv'd 'em by his silence; and the lady was as little satisfy'd with him, as I was with her.

Urania. Hold your tongue. I'll go receive her at the chamber-door.

Eliza. One word more. I wou'd she were marry'd to the Marquis we were talking of. The admirable union it wou'd be betwixt a she-coxcomb and a joker.

Urania. Will you hold your tongue; here she is.

SCENE III.

CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA, GALOPIN.

URANIA.

'TIS very late truly that—

Climene. Oh! for heaven's sake, my dear, bid 'em give me a chair immediately.

Urania to Galopin.] An arm'd chair here, quick.

Climene. Oh! my stars!

Urania. What's the matter then?

Climene. I can support no longer.

Urania. What ails you?

Climene. I faint.

Urania. Are they vapours, that have seiz'd you?

Climene. No.

Urania. Wou'd you be unlac'd?

Climene. O lud, no. Oh!

Urania. What's your illness then? and when did it seize you?

Climene. Above three hours ago, and I brought it from court.

Urania. How?

Climene. As a punishment for my sins, I've just seen that villanous rhapsody of the school for wives. I have still a qualm from the fainting-fit it gave me, and shan't come to myself again, I believe, this fortnight or more.

Eliza. See how distempers come, without one's thinking of 'em.

Urania. I don't know what constitution my cousin and I are of; but we were at the same piece the day before yesterday, and we both came away well and jolly.

Climene. What, have you seen it?

Urania. Yes, and heard it from one end to t'other.

Climene. And were you not almost in convulsions, my dear?

Urania. I am not so delicate, thank heaven; and for my part, I think this play should be more apt to cure people than to make 'em sick.

Climene. Oh! my stars! What is't you say? Can this proposition be advanc'd by a person who has the least reventie in common sense? D'ye think one can, with impunity, quarrel point-blank with reason as you do? And is there, in the truth of the thing, a mind so famili'd for drollery, that can taste the silly things this play is season'd with? For my part, I confess, I cou'd not find the least grain of salt thro' the whole of it: *children by the ear*, had, to my thinking, a detestable gout: the *cream tart* turn'd my stomach; and I thought I shou'd have vomited at the porridge.

Eliza. Heavens! most elegantly spoke! I shou'd have thought this piece had been good; but the lady has so persuasive an eloquence, she turns things in so agreeable

a manner, that one must be of her opinion in spite of one's own.

Urania. For my part, I ha'n't so much complaisance; and to speak my thoughts, I look upon this play to be one of the most diverting the author has produc'd.

Climene. Oh! you make me pity you, to talk in this manner; I can't bear this obscurity of discernment in you. Can one, who has any virtue, find any thing agreeable in a piece that keeps one's modesty under a perpetual alarm, and sullies the imagination at every turn?

Eliza. What a pretty manner of speaking is that! How terribly rough you play, madam, in criticism; and how I pity poor Moliere for having you for an enemy!

Climene. Believe me, my dear, correct in good earnest your judgment; and for your honour, don't tell it to the world, that this comedy pleas'd you.

Urania. I? I can't imagine what you found in it shocking to modesty.

Climene. Lack-a-day, all of it; and I do maintain it as fact, that an honest woman can't see it without confusion; I discover'd so much ordure and nastiness in it.

Urania. You must have a particular discernment then for ordure; for as to my part, I saw none in it.

Climene. 'Tis, undoubtedly, because you won't see it; for in short, all this ordure is, thank heaven, naked to the eye; it has not the least cover to hide it, and the boldest eyes are shock'd at the nudity of it.

Eliza. Oh!

Climene. Ha, ha, ha,

Urania. But once more, if you please, point me out some of this ordure you speak of.

Climene. Alas, is it necessary to point it out?

Urania. Yes; I only ask of you one passage that was very shocking to you.

Climene. Needs there any other than the scene of that Agnes, when she tells what they took from her?

Urania. And what do you find finulty in that?

Climene. Ah!

Urania. Pray?

Climene. Fy.

Urania. Nay, but?

Climene. I've nothing to say t'ye.

Urania. For my part, I see no harm in it.

Climene. So much the worse for you.

Urania. Rather so much the better, I think; I look

upon things on the side that's shewn me; and don't turn 'em about, to find what I ought not to see.

Climene. A lady's modesty—

Urania. A lady's modesty consists not in grimace. It

ill becomes one to be wiser than those who are wise: affectation in this affair is worse than every thing else; and I see nothing so ridiculous as that delicacy of honour which takes every thing in ill part, gives a criminal sense to the most innocent words, and is offended at the shadow of things. Believe me, they who make so much ado are not esteem'd the honestest women. On the contrary, their mysterious severity, and affected grimace provoke the censure of all the world upon the actions of their lives. People are glad to discover any thing to carp at; and to give ye an example, there were some ladies at this play t'other day, over against the box we were in, who by the looks they affected during the whole piece, the turning away their heads, and the hiding their faces, occasion'd a hundred silly things being said on their conduct, all round them, that wou'd never have

been said without this; and even one of the footmen cry'd out aloud, that they were more chaste in their ears than all the rest of their bodies.

Climene. In short one must be blind in this piece, and not seem to see things.

Urania. One ought not to see in't what is not in it.

Climene. Ah! I maintain it once more, that the smuttiness in it puts out one's eyes.

Urania. And I am not of that mind.

Climene. What? does not Agnes, in the passage we are speaking of, say what is visibly shocking to modesty?

Urania. No truly: She says not one word but what, of itself, is decent enough; and if you will conceive something else as couch'd under it, 'tis you who make the ordure, and not she, since she only speaks of the ribbon that was took from her.

Climene. Hoh! Ribbon as long as you please, but that *my* that she stops at is not put there for nothing. Strange thoughts arise upon this *my*. This *my* is furiously scandalous; and say what you can, you can never defend the insolence of this *my*.

Eliza. True, cousin, I'm for the lady against this *my*. *My* is to the last degree insolent, and you're in the wrong to defend this *my*.

Climene. It has an obscenity that is insupportable.

Eliza. How do you call that word, madam?

Climene. Obscenity, madam.

Eliza. Hoh! good lack-a-day! Obscenity. I don't know the meaning of this word, but I think 'tis the prettiest in the world.

Climene. In short, you see your own relation takes my part.

Urania. O dear! she's a tattling girl, who don't speak

as she thinks. You won't much depend upon her if you'll believe me.

Eliza. Fy! what a wicked creature are you to make the lady suspect me! consider a little what condition I shou'd be in shou'd she believe what you say. Am I so far unhappy, madam, that you shou'd entertain this thought of me?

Climene. No, no, I don't mind her words, I think you more sincere than she says.

Eliza. Oh! you are infinitely in the right, madam; and you do me justice when you believe I think you the most engaging person in the world; that I enter into all your sentiments, and am charm'd with every expression you utter.

Climene. Alas! I speak without affectation.

Eliza. One sees it, madam, very plainly, and that ev'ry thing is natural in you. Your words, the tone of your voice, your looks, your gait, your action and your dress, have a *je ne sçay quoi* of quality in 'em that inchant people. I study you by my eyes, by my ears; and I am so full of you, that I strive to ape you and counterfeit you in every thing.

Climene. You're pleas'd to banter me, madam.

Eliza. Pardon me, madam; who cou'd banter you?

Climene. I am no good model, madam.

Eliza. Oh! yes, madam.

Climene. You flatter me, madam.

Eliza. Not at all, madam.

Climene. Have a little mercy on me, madam, if you please.

Eliza. I have so much mercy on you, that I don't say half of what I think of you.

Climene. Oh heavens! Let us drop it, pray. You'd

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICIS'D. 177

throw me into a horrible confusion: [To Urania.] You see in short, madam, we are both against you, and ob-
stinacy sits so ill upon your people of wit—

SCENE IV.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, GALOPIN,
URANIA, ELIZA.

GALOPIN at the chamber door.

HOLD, Sir, if you please.

The Marquis. Certainly thou dost not know me.

Galopin. Yea, I do know you, but you shan't go in.

The Marquis. Hey, what a bustle is here, ye little
skip-jack.

Galopin. It isn't fair to endeavour to get in, in spite
of people's teeth.

The Marquis. I will see thy mistress.

Galopin. She's not at home, I tell you.

The Marquis. Why there she is, in her chamber.

Galopin. That's true, she is there; but she's not at
home for all that.

Urania. What's the meaning of this? What's the
matter there?

The Marquis. 'Tis your lacquey, madam, who's
playing the fool.

Galopin. I tell him, madam, you are not at home,
and still he'll needs come in.

Urania. And why did you tell the gentleman that I'm
not at home?

Galopin. You scolded me t'other day for telling him
you were at home.

Urania. See the insolence of this knave! Pray, Sir,

195 THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICIS'D.

don't believe what he says; 'tis a little giddybrained mortal, and he takes you for another person.

The Marquis. I saw it plainly, madam, and had it not been in respect to you, I shou'd ha' taught him to know people of quality.

Eliza. My cousin is much oblig'd to you for this deference.

Urania to Galopin.] A chair there, impertinence.

Galopin. Isn't there one?

Urania. Bring it hither.

[Galopin pushes the chair rudely, and goes out.

SCENE V.

THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA.

THE MARQUIS. . .

YOUR boy, madam, has a contempt for my person,

Eliza. He wou'd be much to blame, certainly.

The Marquis. 'Tis perhaps because I pay interest for my ill looks. [Laughs.] He, he, he, he!

Eliza. Age will make him better acquainted with people of fashion.

The Marquis. What were you upon, ladies, when I interrupted you?

Urania. Upon the play of The school for wives.

The Marquis. I'm but just come from it.

Climene. Well, Sir, what d'ye think of it, pray?

The Marquis. Absolutely silly.

Climene. Oh! how glad am I of that!

The Marquis. The most villainous thing in the world. What the deuce! I cou'd scarce get a place. I thought I shou'd have been stifled at the door, and never was I

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICIS'D. 139

For trampled upon. See, pray, what a condition my rollers and ribbons are in.

Eliza. Very true, this cries vengeance against The school for wives, and you justly condemn it.

The Marquis. I think there never was so wretched a play made.

Urania. Hoh! here's Dorantes, that we were expecting.

SCENE VI.

DORANTES, THE MARQUIS, CLIMENE, ELIZA;
URANIA.

DORANTES.

PRAY don't stir, and don't break off your discourse! You are upon a subject there which for this four days makes the conversation of almost every house in Paris; and never was any thing more diverting than the different judgments that are pass'd upon it. For in short, I have heard this play condemn'd by some people for the very things that I found others esteem'd it most for.

Urania. Here's the Marquis speaks very ill of it.

The Marquis. 'Tis true. I think it detestable, i'gad; detestable to the last degree of detestable; what one may call detestable.

Dorantes. And I, my dear Marquis, think the opinion detestable.

The Marquis. How, knight, d'ye pretend to vindicate this piece.

Dorantes. Yes, I do pretend to vindicate it.

The Marquis. I'gad, I warrant it detestable.

Dorantes. That warrant is not city-security. But,

Marquis, pray for what reason is this play what you say it is?

The Marquis. Why is it detestable?

Dorantes. Yes.

The Marquis. 'Tis detestable, because it is detestable.

Dorantes. There's not a word to say after this; the cause is ended. But yet inform us, and tell us what faults it has.

The Marquis. What do I know? I didn't so much as give myself the trouble to hear it. But in short, I know I never saw any thing so villanous, as I hope for mercy; and Dorilas, who sat opposite to me, was of my opinion.

Dorantes. The authority is good, thou'rt well supported.

The Marquis. One needs only observe the perpetual loud laughs set up in the pit: I want nothing else to prove 'tis good for nothing.

Dorantes. Then, Marquis, you are one of those fine gentlemen who won't allow the pit to have common sense, and who wou'd be griev'd to laugh along with that, tho' 'twere at the best thing in the world; I saw t'other day one of our friends upon the stage, who made himself ridiculous by this. He heard the whole piece with the most gloomy gravity in the world; and every thing that made others merry, made him frown. At every loud laugh he shrugg'd his shoulders, and look'd with pity upon the pit; and sometimes again looking down with vexation, he cry'd out aloud, laugh then, pit, laugh. Our friend's chagrin was a second comedy; he shew'd away like a generous fellow to the whole assembly, and every body allow'd no man cou'd play his part better than he did. Learn, Marquis, you and others with you, that good sense has no determin'd place at a play; that

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICIS'D. 141

the difference betwixt half a guinea and half a crown makes nothing at all to a good taste; and whether one stand, or sit, one may pass a bad judgment; and that, in short, to take it in general, I shou'd depend a good deal upon the approbation of the pit, because among those who compose it, there are many who are capable of judging of a piece according to rules, and because others judge by a proper method of judging, which is to be guided by things, and not to have any blind prejudice nor affected complaisance, nor ridiculous delicacy.

The Marquis. So, knight, thou'rt a defender of the pit, ar't? I'gad, I'm glad on't, and I shall not fail to acquaint it thou'rt one of its friends. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, he!

Dorantes. Laugh as much as you will, I am for good sense, and can't endure those ebullitions of the brain in our toupee Marquis. It makes me mad to see people make fools of themselves in spite of their quality; your folks who are always decisive, and speak boldly of every thing without knowing a word o' th' matter; who shall clap ye all the bad parts of a play, and not so much as stir at those that are good; who upon viewing a picture, or hearing a concert of music, both blame and praise every thing by rule of contraries; who pick up terms of art wherever they can, which they get by heart, and never fail to disjoint 'em, and put 'em out of their place. S'death, gentlemen, be silent. Since heaven has not blessed you with the knowlege of one earthly thing, don't make yourselves a laughing-stock to those who hear you; and consider that by saying never a word, you may perhaps be thought clever fellows.

The Marquis. I'gad, knight, thou carry'st this matter —

Dorantes. Why, Marquis, I don't speak to you; 'tis to a dozen of those gentry who disgrace the courtiers by their extravagant manners, and make the people believe we are all alike. For my part, I'll justify myself from it to the utmost of my power, and I'll so rally 'em wherever I meet 'em, that at last they shall grow wise.

The Marquis. Pr'ythee tell me, knight, do'st think *Lyfander* has wit?

Dorantes. Yes, doubtless, and a good deal.

Urania. That's what no body can deny him.

The Marquis. Ask him what he thinks of *The School for wives*; you'll see he'll tell you 'tis not to his taste.

Dorantes. Lack-a-day! there are a good many people who are spoil'd by too much wit, who see things imperfectly by strength of light, and who wou'd even be sorry to be of other folks opinion, that they may have the glory of deciding.

Urania. 'Tis true. Our friend is doubtless one of those people: he must be the first of his opinion, and have others wait thro' respect to his judgment: every one's approbation that gets the start of his is an outrage upon his understanding, which he highly revenges by taking the opposite party: he wou'd have folks consult him in all affairs of wit; and I'm certain had the author shewn him his play before he exhibited it to the public, he wou'd have thought it the finest in the world.

The Marquis. And what say ye of the marchioness *Araminta*, who publishes it about town for a dreadful one, and says she cou'd never endure the ordure it is full of?

Dorantes. I shall say she deserves the character she has assum'd, and that there are persons who make themselves ridiculous for affecting too much honour. Tho' she has wit, she has follow'd the ill example of those,

THE SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICIS'D. 243

who, being upon the decline of age, want to make amends for what they see they've lost, and imagine the grimace of a scrupulous prudery will supply the place of youth and beauty. This same lady carries the affair further than any body; the ingeniousness of her scruple discovers obscenity where no person would ever have seen it. They tell ye that these scruples proceed so far as even to disfigure our language, and that there are scarce any words in it which the severity of this lady won't retrench either the head or the tail, on account of the immodest syllables she finds in 'em.

Urania. You are a very wag, knight.

The Marquis. In short, knight, you think to defend your play by satirizing those who condemn it.

Dorantes. Not at all; but I think that this lady is unjustly scandaliz'd —

Eliza. Not too fast, Sir knight; there may be other ladies besides her who may be of the same sentiments.

Dorantes. I know 'tis not you at least, and that when you saw this performance —

Eliza. 'Tis true, but I have chang'd my opinion, and this lady [pointing to Climene.] supports hers by such convincing reasons, that she has carry'd me quite on her side.

Dorantes to Climene.] Oh! Madam, I ask pardon: and, if you will, I'll unsay, for love of you, all that I have said.

Climene. I won't have it to be for love of me, but for the love of reason; for in short that piece, to take it right, is absolutely indefensible; and I don't conceive —

Urania. Hoh! here's the author Mr. Lyfidas; he comes *a propos*, for this affair. Mr. Lyfidas, take your chair and sit down there.

S C E N E VII.

LYSIDAS, CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA,
DORANTES, THE MARQUIS.

LYSIDAS.

MADAM, I come something of the latest ; but I was oblig'd to read my piece to my lady marchioness I was speaking of to you, and the praises given it have kept me an hour longer than I thought of.

Eliza. Praise is a powerful charm to detain an author.

Urania. Sit down then, Mr. Lyfidas, we shall read your piece after supper.

Lyfidas. All they who were there are to come the first night, and have promis'd me to do their duty as they shou'd do.

Urania. I believe it; but, pray once more please to sit down. We are upon an affair here which I shou'd be very glad to go on with.

Lyfidas. I hope, madam, you will take a box too for that day.

Urania. We shall see. Pray let's go on with our discourse.

Lyfidas. I give you warning, madam, that they are almost all taken.

Urania. 'Tis mighty well. In short I wanted you when you came, and all the world was against me here.

Eliza to Urania, and pointing to Dorantes.] He was on your side at first ; but now he knows the lady is at the head of the contrary party, I fancy you have nothing to do but seek out for other assistance.

Climene. No, no. I wou'd not have him neglect his court

court to miss your cousin, I allow his wit to be on the side of his heart.

Dorantes. With this permission, madam, I shall presume to defend myself.

Urania. But first, pray let us know a little the sentiments of Mr. Lyfidas.

Lyfidas. Upon what, madam?

Urania. Upon the subject of The school for wives.

Lyfidas. Ha, ha!

Dorantes. What think you of it?

Lyfidas. I've nothing to say upon that head; and you know that amongst us authors we ought to speak of each others works with a great deal of circumspection.

Dorantes. But pray, between us, what do you think of this play?

Lyfidas. I, Sir?

Urania. Tell us your opinion, honestly.

Lyfidas. I think it very pretty.

Dorantes. Really?

Lyfidas. Really; why not? Is it not indeed a very fine one?

Dorantes. Um, um, you are a wicked spark, Mr. Lyfidas; you don't speak as you think.

Lyfidas. Pardon me.

Dorantes. Lack-a-day, I know you; don't dissemble.

Lyfidas. I, Sir?

Dorantes. I see plainly that you speak well of this piece only out of modesty; and that at the bottom of your heart you are of the opinion of a great many people, who think it bad.

Lyfidas. Ha, ha, ha!

Dorantes. Nay, confess that this comedy is a villainous thing.

Lyfidas. 'Tis true, it is not approv'd by your connoisseurs.

The Marquis. Faith, knight, thou hast it, thou art paid for thy raillery. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Dorantes. Laugh on, my dear Marquis, laugh on.

The Marquis. You see we have the learned on our side.

Dorantes. 'Tis true, Mr. Lyfidas's judgment is something considerable, but Mr. Lyfidas will excuse me if I don't yield for all this; and since I have presum'd to defend myself against the lady's sentiments, he won't take it ill if I oppose his.

Eliza. What, when you see the lady, my Lord marquis, and Mr. Lyfidas against you, dare you resist still? Fy, that's acting with a bad grace.

Climene. For my part, what confounds me is, that people of sense can take it into their heads to give protection to the stupidity of this piece.

The Marquis. Demme, madam, 'tis miserable from beginning to end.

Dorantes. That's soon said, Marquis, there's nothing more easy than to cut the matter short thus, and I don't see any thing can stand against the sovereignty of thy decisions.

The Marquis. 'Slife, all the other comedians who were to see it, said all the ill things of it possible.

Dorantes. Oh! I say not a word more, you're absolutely right; Marquis, since all the other comedians speak ill of it, we must certainly believe 'em. They are all discerning people, and speak without interest; there's no more to be said, I yield.

Climene. Yield, or not yield, I know very well you shall never persuade me to endure the immodesty of this

piece; no more than you shall the disobliging satire in it against the ladies.

Urania. For my part, I shall take care not to be offended at it, and to take nothing to my own account that's said in it. This sort of satire falls directly upon the manners, and hits the persons only by rebound. Let us not apply to ourselves the strokes of a general censure; let us profit by the lesson, if we can, without making as if they spoke to us. All the ridiculous paintings that are drawn upon the stage shou'd be view'd without uneasiness by all the world. They are public mirrors, where we are never to declare that we see ourselves; and 'tis downright to tax ourselves with a crime, to be scandaliz'd at a reproof.

Climene. As to myself, I don't speak of these things in regard to any part I can have in 'em; and I think I live in the world after such a manner as not to fear being look'd for among the paintings drawn for disorderly women.

Eliza. Certainly, madam, one will never look for you there; your conduct is known sufficiently, and is one of those things that no body calls in question.

Urania to Climene.] Therefore, madam, I said nothing that can reach you; and my words, like the satire in comedy, rest in general positions.

Climene. I don't doubt it, madam. But however let us pass this point over. I don't know how you'll receive the reflections thrown on our sex in a certain part of the piece; and for my part, I own to you, I'm in a horrible passion to see this impertinent author call us animals.

Urania. Don't you see 'tis a ridiculous character he makes speak it?

Dorantes. And then, madam, don't you know that

the reproaches of lovers never give scandal? that 'tis much the same with furious as with fondling lovers, and that on such occasions the strangest words, and even something still worse, are taken very often as marks of affection by the very persons who receive them.

Eliza. Say what you will I can't digest this no more than the porridge and *cream-tart* the lady was speaking of just now.

The Marquis. O! yes, faith, *cream-tart*; that's what I was observing a while ago; *cream-tart*! How am I oblig'd to you, madam, for having reminded me of *cream-tart*! Are there apples enough in Normandy for *cream-tart*? *Cream-tart*, i'gad, *cream-tart*!

Dorantes. Well, what mean ye with your *cream-tart*?

The Marquis. 'Slife, *cream-tart*, knight!

Dorantes. But what?

The Marquis. *Cream-tart*!

Dorantes. Tell us your reasons a little.

The Marquis. *Cream-tart*!

Urania. But you should explain your meaning, methinks.

The Marquis. *Cream-tart*, madam!

Urania. What find you to object against?

The Marquis. I? Nothing: *cream-tart*!

Urania. Oh! I give it up.

Eliza. My lord Marquis goes the right way to work, and plays ye off finely. But I wish Mr. Lyfidas would finish, and give 'em a little touch or two in his manner.

Lyfidas. 'Tis not my custom to find fault with any thing, I am very favourable to other peoples works. But in short, no offence to the friendship the knight declares for the author, you must own to me these sort of plays are not properly plays, and that there is a great

deal of difference between all these trifles, compar'd with the beauty of serious pieces. Yet all the world gives in- to it now-a-days; there's no thronging after any thing but this; and you see nothing but a frightful solitude at the grand works, when these silly things shall have all Paris after 'em. I own to you my heart sometimes bleeds at it, and 'tis a scandal to all France.

Climene. 'Tis true, peoples taste is strangely corrupt- ed in this point, and the age vulgarizes furiously.

Eliza. In short that's pretty, *vulgarizes!* was it you invented that, madam?

Climene. Ah!

Eliza. I'm much in doubt about it.

Dorantes. You think then, Mr. Lyfidas, that all the wit and all the beauty lie in serious poems? and that comic pieces are trifles which merit no praise?

Urania. For my part, that's not my sentiment. Tragedy, without doubt, is something fine when 'tis well touch'd; but comedy has its charms, and I think one is not less difficult than the other.

Dorantes. Certainly, madam; and for the difficulty, shou'd you place it more on the side of comedy, perhaps you wou'd not be in the wrong: for in short, I think it much easier to soar upon grand sentiments, to brave for- tune in verse, to accuse the destinies, and reproach the gods, than to enter, as one shou'd do, into the ridicule of men, and to make the faults of all mankind appear agreeable on the stage. When you paint heroes you do what you have amind, these are portraits drawn at plea- sure, where we seek not for resemblance; you have only to follow the traces of an imagination that soars aloft, and often forsakes the true to hit the marvellous. But when you paint men, you must paint after nature. People

expect resemblance in these portraits; you have done nothing if you don't display the people of the age so as to make 'em known. In a word, in serious pieces 'tis sufficient to escape censure to say things that are good sense, and well writ, But this is not sufficient in the others; you must be merry, and 'tis a strange enterprise to make your better sort o' people laugh.

Climene. I think myself in the number of the better sort of people, and yet I did not find one word to laugh at in all I saw of it.

The Marquis. Faith, nor I neither.

Dorantes. As for you, Marquis, I am not astonish'd at it, 'tis because you found no puns in it.

Lyfidas. Faith, Sir, what we meet with there is not much better, and in my opinion all the railery that's in it is very insipid.

Dorantes. The court thought not so—

Lyfidas. Oh! the court, Sir?

Dorantes. Speak out, Mr. Lyfidas. I see plainly you mean that the court is no judge in these matters; and this is the usual refuge of you gentlemen authors, in the bad success of your works, to accuse only the injustice of the age, and the want of discernment in courtiers. Please to know, Mr. Lyfidas, that courtiers have as good eyes as other people; that folks may be ingenious with a Venice point and a feather, as well as with a bob-peruke, and a short round cravat; that the grand test of all your plays is the court; that you must study it's taste to find the art of succeeding; there is no place where the decisions are so just; and without bringing into the account all the men of learning there, one forms a manner of genius there only by plain, natural, good sense, and conversation with the *Beau-Monde*, which, without

comparison, judges more delicately of things, than all the common-place learning of pedants.

Urania. 'Tis true that if you stay but ever so little while there, things enough pass daily before your eyes to acquire a habit of knowing 'em; and above all, whatever belongs to good or bad raillery.

Dorantes. The court, I grant, has some ridiculous people about it, and I am the first, as you may see, to banter 'em. But, faith, there are a great number too amongst the wits by profession; and if we ridicule some marquisses, I think there are a good many more authors to ridicule; and what a droll thing 'twou'd be to bring 'em upon the stage, with their learned grimaces, and their ridiculous refinements; their vicious custom of assassinating people in their works; their greediness of praise; their sparingness of thought; their traffic of reputation; and their lines offensive and defensive? as also their learned wars and combats in prose and verse.

Lyfidas. Moliere, Sir, is very happy in having so warm a patron as you are. But however, to come to fact, the question in debate is, whether his piece be good; and here I engage myself to shew there are in the whole a hundred visible faults.

Urania. 'Tis a strange thing of you gentlemen poets, that you shou'd always condemn the pieces all the world runs after, and never speak well but of those that nobody goes to. You shew an invincible hatred for the one, and an inconceivable tenderness for the other.

Dorantes. That's because 'tis generous to be on the side of the afflicted.

Urania. But pray, Mr. Lyfidas, let us see some of these faults that I perceiv'd nothing of.

Lyfidas. They who are masters of Aristotle and Ho-

race see immediately, madam, that this comedy offends against all the rules of art.

Urania. I confess I've no intimacy with these gentlemen, and that I don't know the rules of art.

Dorantes. You are very merry fellows with your rules, that you puzzle the ignorant and din us in the head with daily. One would think, to hear you talk, that these rules of art were the greatest mysteries in the world; and yet they are nothing but some easy observations, which good sense has made upon what may take away the pleasure one finds in these sort of poems; and the same good sense which made these observations formerly, easily makes 'em at all times, without the help of Horace and Aristotle. I wou'd be glad to know whether the grand rule of all rules is not to please; and whether a piece upon the stage that has gain'd it's end, did not take a right way? Wou'd you have it that the whole public is mistaken in these matters; and that every one shou'd not be a judge of the pleasure he takes in 'em?

Urania. I have observ'd one thing in these gentlemen; 'tis that those who talk most of rules, and know 'em better than others, make plays which no body thinks good.

Dorantes. And this, madam, is what shews what little regard ought to be had to their puzzling rules: for in short, if pieces which are according to rule do not please, and those that please are not according to rule, the rules must of necessity have been made wrong. Let us therefore despise this chicanery to which they wou'd subject the public taste, and never consult any thing in a play but the effect it has on us. Let us heartily follow the things that take our fancy, and never hunt for reasons to prevent our having pleasure.

Urania. For my part, when I see a play, I only mind

whether things touch me; and when I am well diverted by it, I don't enquire whether I was in the wrong, and whether the rules of Aristotle forbad me to laugh.

Dorantes. 'Tis exactly like a man who shou'd have found an excellent sauce, and shou'd examine whether 'twere good by the rules of a French-cook.

Urania. Very true; and I admire at the refinements of certain people in matters wherein we ought to follow our own sense.

Dorantes. You are right, madam, to think all these mysterious refinements impertinent. For in short if they take place, we are reduc'd no longer to believe ourselves; our own senses must be slaves in every thing; and even in eating and drinking we must not dare any longer to think any thing good, without leave from these gentlemen adepts.

Lyfidas. In short, Sir, your whole reason is, that The school for wives has pleas'd; and you shou'd not at all care whether 'twere done by rule, provided —

Dorantes. Softly, Mr. Lyfidas, I don't grant ye that. I say plainly the great art is to please, and that this comedy having pleas'd those it was made for, I think it sufficient for it, and that there is no reason to mind the rest. But withal, I maintain it does not offend against any of the rules you speak of. I have read 'em, thank my stars, as well as other people, and I cou'd easily make it appear that we have not, perhaps, a piece on the stage more regular than this.

Eliza. Courage, Mr. Lyfidas, we are undone if you give way.

Lyfidas. How, Sir, the protasis, the epitasis, and the peripetie —

Dorantes. Nay, Mr. Lyfidas, you knock us down

with your hard words: pray don't seem so learned. Civilize your discourse a little, and speak to be understood. D'ye think that a Greek name gives greater force to your reasons? Should you not think full out as pretty to say the exposition of the subject, as the protasis; the plot, as the epitalis, and the unravelling as the peripetie?

Lyfidas. These are terms of art, that we are allow'd to make use of: but since these words offend your ears, I shall explain myself in another way; and I desire you wou'd answer me positively to three or four things I am going to say: Can one endure a piece which offends against the proper name of theatrical pieces? For after all, the name of Dramatic poem comes from a Greek word, which signifies to act, to shew that the nature of this poem consists in action; and in this comedy there are no actions pass, and all consist in recitals made by Agnes or by Horace.

The Marquis. Hah! hah! Knight!

Climene. Ingeniously remark'd, this is coming to the nicest point of things.

Lyfidas. Can any thing be less witty, or to speak more properly, more low, than some words which all the world laugh'd at, and especially that of *children by the ear*?

Climene. Very well.

Eliza. Oh! hah! hah! hah!

Lyfidas. Is not the scene of the footman and the maid within doors, of a tedious length, and absolutely impertinent?

The Marquis. True.

Climene. Certainly.

Eliza. He's in the right.

Lyfidas. Does not Arnolph give his money too freely to Horace? And since 'tis the ridiculous character of the

piece, thou'd he have made him do the action of a worthy man?

The Marquis. Good. The remark is good again.

Climene. Admirable!

Eliza. Marvellous.

Lyfidas. Are not the sermon and the maxims ridiculous things, and what strike at the respect due to our religion?

The Marquis. Well said.

Climene. Spoke as it ought to be.

Eliza. Nothing can be better.

Lyfidas. And that in short, Mr. La Souche, who is made a man of wit, and who appears so serious in so many passages, don't he descend to something too comical, and too extravagant in the fifth act, when he sets forth the violence of his love to Agnes, with that wild rolling of his eyes, with those ridiculous sighs, and those foolish tears, which set all the world a laughing?

The Marquis. Wonderful, i'gad!

Climene. Miraculous!

Eliza. *Vivat* Mr. Lyfidas.

Lyfidas. I pass over a hundred thousand other things for fear of being tedious.

The Marquis. Faith, knight, thou'rt but in an ill taking.

Dorantes. We shall see.

The Marquis. Thou hast met with thy man.

Dorantes. Perhaps so.

The Marquis. Answer, answer, answer, answer.

Dorantes. Very willingly. 'Tis——

The Marquis. Answer then, prithee.

Dorantes. Permit me then. If——

The Marquis. Egad, I defy thee to answer.

Dorantes. Yes, if you talk for ever.

Climene. Pray, let us hear his reasons.

Dorantes. First of all, 'tis not true, to say that the whole piece consists only of narration: one sees a good deal of action in it, which passes upon the stage; and the narrations themselves are of actions according to the constitution of the subject; inasmuch as these narrations are all innocently related to an interested person, who by this means is at every turn thrown into a confusion, which diverts the spectators, and takes all the measures he can, upon each information, to ward off the mischief he fears.

Urania. For my part, I think the beauty of the subject of *The school of wives* consists in this continu'd confidence; and what appears diverting enough to me, is that a man who has sense, and who is warn'd of every thing by an innocent creature who is his mistress, and a mar-plot who is his rival, cannot with all this escape what happens to him.

The Marquis. Trifles, trifles.

Climene. A weak answer.

Eliza. Pitiful reasons.

Dorantes. As to what regards the *children by the ear*, it has no jest in it but in regard to Arnolph; and the author did not insert this as a jest of it self, but only for a thing which characterizes the man, and paints his extravagance so much the better, since he repeats a trivial, foolish thing that Agnes had said, as the finest thing in the world, and what gives him an inconceivable joy.

The Marquis. Wretchedly answer'd.

Climene. 'Tis not satisfactory.

Eliza. 'Tis saying nothing.

Dorantes. As to the money he gives so liberally, besides that the letter of his very good friend is a sufficient

security to him, 'tis by no means incompatible that a man should be ridiculous in certain things, and a worthy man in others. And for the scene of Allen and Georgetta within doors, which some people have thought long and insipid, 'tis certain 'tis not without its reasons; and in the same way that Arnolph is caught during his journey, by the pure innocence of his mistress, he waits a long while at his door upon his return, by the innocence of his servants, that he might be punish'd throughout, by the very things which he thought to secure his precautions by.

The Marquis. These reasons are good for nothing.

Climene. This is all ineffectual.

Eliza. 'Tis pitiful.

Dorantes. As to the moral discourse, which you call a sermon, 'tis certain your truly religious people who heard it, saw nothing that struck at what you mention'd; and without doubt those words of hell, and boiling cauldrons are justify'd by the extravagance of Arnolph, and by the innocence of her he speaks to. And as to the amorous transports of the fifth act, which you accuse as too extravagant and burlesque, I wou'd be glad to know whether this is not a satire upon lovers, and whether even sober people, and the most serious upon the like occasions, don't do things——

The Marquis. Faith, knight, thou wouldst do better to hold thy tongue.

Dorantes. Very well. But in short, if we were to mind our selves when we are very amorous——

The Marquis. I won't so much as hear you.

Dorantes. Hear me if you please. Don't we in the violence of the passion ——

The Marquis. Tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, lol, lol, lol; lol, de rol.

[Sings.]

Dorantes. What ———

The Marquis. Tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, tol, lol, lol, de lol.

Dorantes. I don't know if ———

The Marquis. Tol, lol, lol, lol, de rol, tol, lol, tol, lol, de lol.

Urania. I think that ———

The Marquis. La, la, la, lare, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.

Urania. There are a good many merry things pass in our dispute: I fancy one might very well make a little comedy out of 'em, and that this would not do ill at the end of The school for wives.

Dorantes. You're in the right.

The Marquis. Igad, knight, thou would'st play a part in it not at all to thy advantage.

Dorantes. 'Tis true, Marquis.

Climene. For my part, I cou'd wish 'twere done, provided they'd treat the affair just as it has pass'd.

Eliza. And I'd furnish 'em with my character, with all my heart.

Lyfidas. I think I shou'd not refuse 'em mine.

Urania. Since every body wou'd be satisfy'd, knight, take notes of it, and give it to Moliere whom you know, to work it up into a play.

Climene. He wou'd not care for it, without doubt it wou'd be no panegyric upon him.

Urania. No, no, I know his humour; he does not care if they laugh at his pieces, provided people do but flock to 'em.

Dorantes. Yes, but what unravelling can we find for this plot? for here can be neither marriage, nor discovery; and I don't see how we can end this dispute.

Urania. We must think of some incident for that.

SCENE THE LAST.

CLIMENE, URANIA, ELIZA, DORANTES, THE
MARQUIS, LYSIDAS, GALOPIN.

GALOPIN.

MADAM, supper's upon table.

Dorantes. Hah! this is exactly what we wanted for the unravelling our plot, and there's nothing can be thought of more natural. They shall dispute strong and firm on one side and t'other as we have done, without any body's yielding; a boy shall come and tell 'em that the dishes are serv'd up, they rise and every one goes to supper.

Urania. The play can't end better, and we shall do well to stop here.

THE END.

Urania. We must think of some method for doing
this. We must think of some method for doing

SCENE THE LAST

CELESTINE, URANIA, FELIX, DORANTE, THE
MARQUIS, LYSIDAS, GALORIN.

GALORIN.

MADAME! My finger's upon a noble
Dorante! What he is exactly what we wanted for
this evening; our money and cheap's feeling can be
straight of more modest. They shall dispute about and
then on our side and better as we have done without
any body's help; they shall come and will have done
the dishes and the wine and the wine and the wine
to supper.

7 MA 55

Urania. The thing can't be done and we shall do
well to stop here. In the end we shall be left with
nothing but the wine and the wine and the wine.

CELESTINE. The thing can't be done and we shall do
well to stop here. In the end we shall be left with
nothing but the wine and the wine and the wine.

THE END.

Urania. The thing can't be done and we shall do
well to stop here. In the end we shall be left with
nothing but the wine and the wine and the wine.

IMPROVISED BY THE AUTHOR

A C T O R S

THE

IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

A

C O M E D Y.

SCENE Versailles, in the King's antechamber.

A C T O R S.

MOLIERE, a ridiculous marquis.

BRECOURT, a man of quality.

LA GRANGE, a ridiculous marquis.

Du CROISY, a poet.

Mrs. DU PARC, a ceremonious marchioness.

Mrs. BEJART, a prude.

Mrs. DE BRIE, a sage coquette.

Mrs. MOLIERE, a satirical wit.

Mrs. DU CROISY, a whining coquette.

Mrs. HERVEY, a conceited chambermaid.

TORRILLIERE, an impertinent marquis.

BEJART, a busy-body.

FOUR ATTENDANTS.



SCENE Versailles, in the king's antichamber.

THE

IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

SCENE I.

MOLIERE, BRECOURT, LA GRANGE,
DU CROISY, Mrs. DU PARC, Mrs. BE-
JART, Mrs. DE BRIE, Mrs. MOLIERE,
Mrs. DU CROISY, Mrs. HERVEY.

MOLIERE alone, talking to the players who are be-
hind the scenes.

COME, gentlemen and ladies, are you in jest, de-
laying thus; and won't you come hither? Plague,
take the people! So ho, Mr. Brecourt,

Brecourt behind the scenes.] What?

Molier. Mr. La Grange. How shall

La Grange. What now?

Molier. Mr. Du Croisy.

Du Croisy. What do you want?

Molier. Mrs. Du Parc.

Mrs. Du Parc. Well?

Molier. Mrs. Bejart.

Mrs. Bejart. Who's there?

Molier. Mrs. De Brie.

Mrs. De Brie. What would you have?

Moliere. Mrs. Du Croify.

Mrs. Du Croify. What's the matter?

Moliere. Mrs. Hervey.

Mrs. Hervey. Here.

Moliere. I believe I shall go distracted with all these people here. Heark'e! [Enter Brecourt, La Grange, Du Croify.] 'Sdeath, gentlemen, will you make me mad to day?

Brecourt. What would you have us do? We don't know our parts, and you'll make us mad to oblige us to play in this manner.

Moliere. Oh, what strange animals to be govern'd are actors!

[Enter Mrs. Bejart, Du Parc, De Brie, Moliere, Du Croify, and Hervey.]

Mrs. Bejart. Well, we are here; what d'ye intend to do?

Mrs. Du Parc. What's your meaning?

Mrs. De Brie. What's to be done?

Moliere. Pray let us stay here, and since we are all dress'd, and the king does not come these two hours, let us employ that time to rehearse our thing, and see in what manner we must play our parts.

La Grange. How shall we play what we don't know?

Mrs. Du Parc. As for me, I declare t'ye I don't remember one word of my part.

Mrs. De Brie. I know very well that I must be prompted from one end to the other.

Mrs. Bejart. And I prepare to hold my part in my hand.

Mrs. Moliere. And I too.

Mrs. Hervey. For my part, I have no great matter to say.

Mrs. Du Croisy. Nor I neither, but for all that I won't answer for it that I shan't be out.

Du Croisy. I wish I could be quit on't for ten Pistoles.

Brecourt. And I for twenty good strokes of a cudgel, I assure you.

Moliere. You are all mighty sick in having a difficult part to play; what would you do if you were in my place?

Mrs. Bejart. Who you? you have no cause to complain, for as you wrote the piece you need not fear being out.

Moliere. And have I nothing to fear but want of memory? Do you reckon the anxiousness of success which regards me alone, nothing? And do you think it a small matter to expose a comique performance before such an assembly as this is? to undertake to make persons laugh who strike us with respect, and never laugh but when they please? Is there any author but what ought to tremble when he comes to this trial? And have not I reason to say that I would give every thing in the world to be quit of it.

Mrs. Bejart. If that makes you tremble, you'd be more cautious, and would not have undertaken in eight days what you have done.

Moliere. How could I refuse it when commanded by a king to do it?

Mrs. Bajart. How? By a respectful excuse founded upon the impossibility of the thing in the little time that was given you: any body else in your place would have manag'd his reputation better, and taken care not to expose himself as you do. What will become of you, pray, if the thing don't succeed? and what an advantage, think you, all your enemies will make on't?

I Mrs. De Brie. Indeed you should have excus'd your self, with respect, to the king, or requir'd more time.

Moliere. Oh, madam, kings love nothing so much as a ready obedience, and are not at all pleas'd by meeting with obstacles: things are not good but just when they desire them; and endeavouring to defer their diversion is, with them, taking away all the agreeableness of it. They'd have pleasures that may not make them wait, and the less prepar'd the more agreeable they are always to them. We ought never to regard our selves in what they require of us, our only business is to please them, and when they command us any thing 'tis our business to take advantage immediately of their desire. We had better acquit ourselves ill of what they require of us than not to acquit ourselves of it soon enough; and if we have the shame of not succeeding, we have always the glory of having speedily obey'd their commands. But pray let us set about our rehearsal.

Mrs. Bejart. How d'ye intend we shall do, if we don't know our parts?

Moliere. You shall know 'em, I tell you; and if you even should not know 'em perfectly, could not you supply 'em with your own wit, since 'tis prose, and you know the subject.

Mrs. Bejart. Your servant. Prose is still worse than verse.

Mrs. Moliere. Give me leave to tell you, you ought to have made a comedy where you might have play'd by your self.

Moliere. Hold your peace, wife, you are an ass.

Mrs. Moliere. Thank you, good husband. See how it is, matrimony alters people strangely, you would not have said this a year and half ago.

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES. 167

Moliere. Pray hold your tongue.

Mrs. Moliere. 'Tis a strange thing that a little ceremony should be capable of depriving us of all our good qualities; and that a husband and a galant should look upon the same person with such different eyes.

Moliere. What a prating is here!

Mrs. Moliere. I'faith if I were to write a comedy I would write it on this subject. I would justify the women in a great many things they are accus'd of, and I'd make the husbands dread the difference there is between their rough manners and the civility of galants.

Moliere. Well, let that alone, we are not to prattle now, we have something else to do.

Mrs. Bejart. But since you were commanded to work on the subject of the criticism that's made upon you, why did not you make that comedy of comedians that you have talk'd to us of a long time? 'twas a thing ready invented, and would have come very proper, and so much the better, as having undertaken to paint you, they open'd an occasion to you to paint them likewise, and it might have been call'd their picture much more justly than all they have done can be call'd yours; for to mimic a comedian in a comic part is not to describe him, but 'tis only describing after him the characters he represents, and making use of the same strokes, and the same colours which he's oblig'd to use in the different pictures of the ridiculous characters, which he imitates after nature. But to mimic a comedian in serious parts is describing him by faults which are entirely his own, since those kind of characters will not bear either the gestures or ridiculous tone of voice by which he is known again.

Moliere. 'Tis true, but I have my reasons for not

doing it; I did not think, between us, the thing worth the trouble, and besides it requir'd more time to execute that idea. As their days of playing are the same with ours, I have scarce been to see them above three or four times since we have been at Paris; I caught nothing of their manner of acting but what at first was obvious to the eye, and I should want to study them more to make portraits very like them.

Mrs. Du Parc. For my part, I have discover'd some resemblances of 'em come from your mouth.

Mrs. De Brie. I never hear'd this talk'd of.

Moliere. 'Tis a thought I once had in my head, but I have left it as a trifle, an impertinent thing, that perhaps would not have made people laugh.

Mrs. De Brie. Tell it me a little, since you have told it others.

Moliere. We han't time now.

Mrs. De Brie. Only in two words.

Moliere. I had thoughts of a comedy in which there should have been a poet whom I would have represented myself, who should come to offer a piece to a company of comedians newly come out of the country. Have you actors and actresses, he should have said, that are capable of setting off a performance well, for my piece is a piece — Ah! Sir, the comedian should have answer'd, we have men and women who have been thought tolerable in all places we have pass'd thro'. And who plays the king amongst you? There's an actor who performs it sometimes. Who! that fine-shap'd young man? You jest sure! You should have a king that's very fat, and foursquare. S'death a king that's stuff'd as he should be. A king of a vast circumference, and that can fill a throne handsomely. A fine-shap'd king is a fine thing indeed!

This

This is one grand fault already ; but let me hear him repeat a dozen verses a little. Upon which the comedian should have repeated, for example, some verses of the king of Nicomedia,

I say, Araspus, he has too well serv'd me,

My power augmenting ——— the most naturally that he possibly could. Then the poet: What, do you call that repeating? you rally sure; you should speak things with an emphasis. Harken to me. [Imitating Monfleury, an excellent actor of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

I say, Araspus, etc. ———

Do you see this posture? Observe that well. There, lay a stress as you ought on the last verse; that's what gains approbation, and raises a clap. But, Sir, the comedian should have answer'd, Methinks a king who is discoursing alone with the captain of his guards, speaks a little more humanely, and scarce makes use of this demoniacal tone. You don't understand it. Go and speak as you do, you'll see if you'll get one clap. Ah, let's see a little a scene of a lover and his mistress. Upon which an actor and actress should have play'd a scene together, which is that of Camilla and Curiatius,

Dost go, dear soul, and does this fatal honour

Please thee at the expence of all our welfare?

Alas! I too well see, etc, like the other, and as naturally as he was able. Then the poet immediately: You are in jest, you do nothing to the purpose, thus you ought to repeat this,

[Imitating Mrs. Beauchateau a player of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Dost go, dear soul, etc.

No, I know thee better, etc.

Do you see how natural and passionate this is? Admire this smiling countenance which she preserves in the greatest afflictions. In short, this is the design; and he should have run over all the players in this manner.

Mrs. De Brie. I think the design very humorous, and I knew some of 'em by the very first verses. Go on, pray.

Moliere imitating Beauchateau, a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne, in some lines of the Cid.]

Pierc'd to the bottom of my heart, etc.

And do you know this man in the Pompey of Sertorius?

[Imitating Hauteroche a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

The enmity which reigns between both parties
Yields there no honour, etc.

Mrs. De Brie. I know him a little, I think.

Moliere. And this?

[Imitating De Villiers a comedian of the Hotel de Bourgogne.

Lord Polibore is dead, etc.

Mrs. De Brie. Yes, I know who he is; but there are some amongst 'em, I believe, that you'd find it hard to mimic.

Moliere. O! there's not one of 'em but what may be caught in some place or other, if I had studied 'em well: but you make me lose time which is precious to us. Let us mind, pray, and not amuse ourselves any more with talking. [To La Grange.] Do you take care to play your part of Marquis well with me.

Mrs. Moliere. Always Marquisses.

Moliere. Yes, always Marquisses: What the duce would you have one take for an agreeable character for the stage? The Marquis now is the jest of the comedy; and as in all the old comedies there was always a buffoon

servant that made the audience laugh, so in all our pieces now there must be always a ridiculous Marquis to divert the company.

Mrs. Bejart. 'Tis true, that can't be omitted.

Moliere. For you, madam ———

Mrs. Du Parc. Nay, as for me, I shall acquit myself very ill of my character, and I don't know why you gave me this ceremonious part.

Moliere. Lack-a-day! madam, this is what you said when you had that given you in *The School for wives* criticis'd, yet you acquitted yourself of it to a wonder, and all the world agreed that it could not have been done better than you did it. Believe me, this will be the same, and you'll play it better than you imagine.

Mrs. Du Parc. How can that be? for there's no body in the world less ceremonious than I am.

Moliere. 'Tis true, and in that you better shew that you are an excellent comedian, to represent a character well that is so contrary to your humour. Endeavour then, all of you, to take the character of your parts right, and to imagine that you are what you represent. [To Du Croisy.] You play the poet, and you ought to fill yourself with that character, to mark the pedant air which he preserves even in the conversation of the beau monde; that sententious tone of voice, and that exactness of pronounciation which lays a stress on all the syllables, and does not let one letter escape of the strictest orthography. [To Brecourt.] As for you, you play a courtier, as you have already done in *The School for wives* criticis'd; that is, you must assume a sedate air, a natural tone of voice, and make the fewest gestures possible. [To La Grange.] As for you, I have nothing to say to you. [To Mrs. Bejart.] You represent one of

those women who, provided they don't make love, think that every thing else is permitted 'em; those women who are always fiercely intrench'd in their prudery, look upon every body with contempt, and think all the good qualities that others possess are nothing in comparison of a wretched honour which no body regards. Have this character always before your eyes, that you make the grimaces of it right, [To Mrs. Brie.] As for you, you play one of those women who think they are the most virtuous persons in the world, provided they save appearances; those women who think the crime lies only in the scandal; who would carry on the affairs they have quietly on the foot of an honourable attachment, and call those friends whom other people call galants. Enter well into this character. [To Mrs. Moliere.] You play the same character as in the Criticism, I have nothing to say to you any more than to Mrs. Du Parc. [To Mrs. Croisy.] As for you, you represent one of those persons who are sweetly charitable to all the world, those women who always give a lash with their tongue *en passant*, and would be very sorry if they suffer'd their neighbour to be well spoke of. I believe you'll not acquit yourself ill of this part. [To Mrs. Hervey.] And for you, you are a conceited Abigail, who's always thrusting her oar into conversation, and catching all her mistress's terms as much as she can. I tell you all your characters, that you may imprint them strongly in your minds. Let us begin to repeat, and see how 'twill do. Oh, here's an impertinent, we wanted no more than this.

SCENE II.

TORRILLIERE, MOLIERE, BRÉCOURT,
LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, Mesdemoiselles
DUPARC, BEJART, DEBRIE, MOLIERE,
DU CROISY, HERVEY.

TORRILLIERE.

GOOD-MORROW, Mr. Moliere.

Moliere. Sir, your servant. [Aside.] Plague take the fellow!

Torrilliere. How goes it?

Moliere. Very well, at your service. [To the actresses.] Ladies, don't——

Torrilliere. I come from a place where I have been saying a great many fine things of you.

Moliere. I'm oblig'd to you. [Aside.] The devil take thee! [To the actors.] Have a little care——

Torrilliere. You play a new piece to-day, d'ye?

Moliere. Yes, Sir. [To the actresses.] Don't forget——

Torrilliere. The king makes you do it, hey?

Moliere. Yes, Sir. [To the actors.] Pray remember to——

Torrilliere. What do you call it?

Moliere. Yes, Sir.

Torrilliere. I ask what you call it.

Moliere. I'faith! I don't know. [To the actresses.] If you please you must——

Torrilliere. How shall you be dress'd?

Moliere. As you see. [To the actors.] Pray now——

Torrilliere. When d'ye begin?

Moliere. When the king comes. [Aside.] Deuce on the question-monger!

Torrilliere. When do you think he'll come?

Moliere. Plague choke me if I know, Sir.

Torrilliere. Don't you know——

Moliere. Look you, Sir, I am the most ignorant man in the world, I know nothing of whatever you may ask me I protest t'ye. [Aside.] I'm mad; this tormenting coxcomb comes with an air of tranquillity asking one question, and never considers that one has other things in one's head.

Torrilliere. Ladies, your servant.

Moliere. Good. Now he's got on t'other side.

Torrilliere to Mrs. Croisy.] You are as handsome as a little angel. Do you play, both of you, to-day?

[Looking on Mrs. Hervey.

Mrs. Croisy. Yes, Sir.

Torrilliere. Without you the comedy would not be worth much.

Moliere whispering the actresses.] Won't you send that man there a-going?

Mrs. De Brie to Torrilliere.] Sir, we have something here to repeat together.

Torrilliere. Oh! S'life, I'll not hinder you. You have nothing to do but go on.

Mrs. De Brie. But——

Torrilliere. No, no, I shou'd be sorry to incommode any body; do freely what you have to do.

Mrs. De Brie. Yes, but——

Torrilliere. I am a man of no ceremony, I tell you, and you may repeat what you please.

Moliere. Sir, these ladies are loth to tell you, that they could wish no body were here, during this rehearsal.

Torrilliere. Why? there's no danger as to me.

Moliere. Sir, 'tis a custom which they observe, and you'll have more pleasure when things surprize you.

Torrilliere. I'll go tell 'em then that you are ready.

Moliere. Not at all, Sir, pray don't make such haste.

SCENE III.

MOLIERE, BRECOURT, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, Mesdemoiselles Du PARC, BEJART, DE BRIE, MOLIERE, DU CROISY, HERVEY.

MOLIERE.

AH! how full of impertinents the world is! Well, come, let us begin. First then imagine that the scene is in the king's antichamber, for that's a place where humorous things enough pass every day. 'Tis easy to bring there all the persons we have a mind to, and we may even find reasons to warrant the coming in of the women which I introduce. The comedy opens with two marquisses who meet. [To La Grange.] Remember you to come as I told you, there, with that air which is call'd the Bel Air, combing your peruke, and humming a tune between your teeth. La, la, la, la, la, la, la. Do you range yourselves then, for the two marquisses must have room, they are not people to be contain'd in a small space. [To La Grange.] Come speak.

La Grange. " Good-morrow, marquis."

Moliere. Lack-a-day! that's not the tone of a marquis; you must take it a little higher, the most part of

those gentlemen affect a particular manner of speaking to distinguish themselves from the vulgar. *Good-morrow, Marquis.* Begin again.

La Grange. "Good-morrow, Marquis."

Moliere. "Hah! Marquis, your servant."

La Grange. "What art thou doing there?"

Moliere. "'Sdeath! you see I wait till all these gentlemen have unstop'd the door to shew my face there."

La Grange. "Plague! what a croud there is! I don't care to thrust my nose in amongst 'em, and had much rather go in the last."

Moliere. "There are twenty people who are very sure of not getting in, and yet won't forbear crouding and taking up all the avenues of the gate."

La Grange. "Let us bawl out both our names to the porter, that he may call us in."

Moliere. "That's well enough for thee, but for my part I'll not be play'd by Moliere."

La Grange. "However, marquis, I think 'twas you he play'd in his Criticism."

Moliere. "I! I'm your slave, 'twas yourself in *propria persona*."

La Grange. "Hah! faith you are good enough to apply your own character to me."

Moliere. "I'gad, you are a pleasant mortal, to give to me what belongs to yourself."

La Grange laughing.] "Ha, ha, ha! that's drole."

Moliere laughing.] "Ha, ha, ha! that's comical."

La Grange. "What! you'll maintain that 'tis not you that's play'd in the character of the marquis in 'The school for wives criticis'd.'"

Moliere. "'Tis true; 'tis I. *Detestable 'sdeath! detestable, cream-tart.* Tis I, 'tis I, certainly 'tis I."

La Grange. "Yes, i'gad, 'tis you, you have no need
"to rally; and if you will, we'll lay a wager, and see
"which of us is in the right."

Moliere. "And what will you lay?"

La Grange. "I'll lay an hundred Pistoles that 'tis you."

Moliere. "And I, an hundred Pistoles that 'tis you."

La Grange. "A hundred Pistoles down."

Moliere. "Down. Ninety Pistoles upon Amyntas,
"and ten Pistoles down."

La Grange. "I will."

Moliere. "'Tis done."

La Grange. "Your mony runs a great risque."

Moliere. "Your's is well ventur'd."

La Grange. "Who shall we be judg'd by?"

Moliere to Brecourt.] "Here's a man that shall judge
"us. Chevalier."

Brecourt. "What?"

Moliere. So, there's t'other takes the tone of a Mar-
quis. Did not I tell you that you play'd a part wherein
you should speak naturally?

Brecourt. True.

Moliere. Come then. "Chevalier?"

Brecourt. "What?"

Moliere. "Judge between us a little, on a wager we
"have laid."

Brecourt. "And what is it?"

Moliere. "We dispute who is the Marquis of" Mo-
liere's Criticism; "he lays 'tis me, and I lay 'tis him."

Brecourt. "And I judge that 'tis neither one nor the
"other; you are both fools to apply such things to your
"selves; and this is what I heard Moliere complain
"of t'other day, speaking to persons who charg'd him
"with the same thing that you do. He said that nothing

" displeas'd him so much as being accus'd of having an
 " eye to some particular person in the pictures he draws:
 " that his design is to paint the manners, without touch-
 " ing the person; and that all the characters he repre-
 " sents are airy characters, and properly phantoms, which
 " he dresses according to his fancy to delight the specta-
 " tors: that he should be very sorry if he had mark'd any
 " body in 'em; and that if any thing was capable of
 " disgusting him against writing comedies, 'twas the re-
 " semblances which people will always find in 'em, and
 " the notion which his enemies maliciously endeavour to
 " keep up, to do him ill offices with some people whom he
 " never thought of. And indeed I find he's in the right;
 " for why pray shou'd people apply all his gestures and
 " all his words, and endeavour to bring him into quarrels
 " by saying openly, he plays such a one, when they are
 " things which may fit a hundred persons? as the business
 " of comedy is to represent in general all the imperfections
 " of men, and principally of the men of our age, it is im-
 " possible for Moliere to write any character which
 " won't hit some body in the world; and if he must be ac-
 " cus'd of having aim'd at all the persons in whom the
 " faults he describes are to be found, he must certainly
 " make no more comedies."

Moliere. " Faith, Chevalier, you have a mind to
 " justify" Moliere, " and spare our friend there."

La Grange. " Not at all; 'tis you he spares, and
 " we'll get other judges."

Moliere. " Be it so. But tell me, Chevalier, don't
 " you think that your Moliere is exhausted now, and
 " that he'll find no more matter for ———"

Brecourt. " More matter? Ah! dear Marquis, we
 " shall always furnish him with enough, and we don't

"take the way to grow wiser for all that he does, and
 "all that he says."

Moliere. Stay. You must mark all this passage more.
 Here me speak it a little. — "And that he'll find
 "no more matter for — more matter? Ah! dear Mar-
 "quis, we shall always furnish him with enough; and
 "we don't take the way to grow wiser for all that he
 "does, and all that he says. Do you think he has ex-
 "hausted in his comedies all the ridicule of mankind?
 "And, without going from court, has he not still twenty
 "characters of people he has not yet touch'd upon? Has
 "he not for example those who profess the greatest friend-
 "ship in the world, and who, as soon as their backs are
 "turn'd, esteem it a piece of galantry to pull one another
 "to pieces? Has he not those egregious sycophants,
 "those insipid flatterers, who don't season with the least
 "salt the praises they bestow, and all whose flatteries
 "have a fulsome which makes those that hear 'em sick
 "at heart? Has he not those base occasional courtiers,
 "those perfidious adorers of fortune, who praise you in
 "prosperity and run you down in adversity? Has he not
 "those who are always discontent with the court, those
 "useless attendants, those troublesome assiduous creatures,
 "those people I say who can only reckon their impor-
 "tunities for services, and who expect a recompence for
 "having besieg'd the king ten years running? Has he not
 "those who equally caress all the world, who hand round
 "their civilities from right to left, and run to all they
 "see with the same embraces, and the same protestati-
 "ons of friendship? Sir, your most humble servant; Sir,
 "I'm entirely at your service. Reckon me amongst
 "yours, my dear. Esteem me, Sir, as the warmest of your
 "friends. Sir, I'm overjoy'd to embrace you. Ah! Sir,

"I did not see you. Do me the favour to employ me, be
 "persuaded that I am entirely yours. You are the man
 "of all the world I esteem the most; there's no body I
 "honour equal to you; I conjure you to believe it; I
 "beseech you not to doubt on't; your servant, most humble
 "slave. Go, go, Marquis, Moliere will always have
 "more subjects than he desires, and all that he has touch'd
 "upon hitherto is but a trifle in comparison of what re-
 "mains." There's pretty nigh as this should be play'd."

Brecourt. Enough.

Moliere. Go on.

Brecourt. "Here's Climene and Eliza."

Moliere to Mrs. Du Parc and Mrs. Moliere.] Upon
 which you two are to come. [To Mrs. Du Parc.] Do
 you take care to make grimaces as you ought, and to be
 very ceremonious. This will be a little constraint upon
 you, but what can be done? we must sometimes put a
 violence on ourselves.

Mrs. Moliere. "Certainly, madam, I knew you a
 "great way off, and saw plainly by your air that it could
 "be no body but you."

Mrs. Du Parc. "I am come to wait here, d'ye see,
 "till a man comes out with whom I have some business."

Mrs. Moliere. "And so am I."

Moliere. "Ladies, these trunks will serve you for
 "elbow-chairs."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Come, madam, pray take your
 "place."

Mrs. Moliere. "After you, madam."

Moliere. Good. After these little dumb ceremonies,
 let every one take their place and speak sitting, except
 the marquisses, who must sometimes get up and some-
 times sit down, according to their natural restlessness.

" 'Sdeath, Chevalier, you ought to give your rowlers
" physic."

Brecourt. " How ?"

Moliere. " They are very bad."

Brecourt. " Your punster's servant."

Mrs. Moliere. " Lard! madam, I think your com-
" plexion is of a dazling whiteness, and your lips of a
" surprising flame-colour."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Ah! What do you say, madam?
" Don't look at me, I'm extremely ugly to-day."

Mrs. Moliere. " Pray, madam, lift up your hood a
" little."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Fie! I am frightful, I tell you, and
" quite frighten myself."

Mrs. Moliere. " You are so handsome!"

Mrs. Du Parc. " No, no."

Mrs. Moliere. " Shew yourself."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Oh! pray don't."

Mrs. Moliere. " Pray now."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Lard! no."

Mrs. Moliere. " Yes, do."

Mrs. Du Parc. " You make me mad."

Mrs. Moliere. " One moment."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Ah!"

Mrs. Moliere. " Positively you shall shew yourself,
" we can't bear not to see you."

Mrs. Du Parc. " Lard! What a strange person you
" are! you are furiously set upon what you have a mind
" to."

Mrs. Moliere. " Ah! madam, I'll swear you have no
" disadvantage in appearing in full light. What wicked
" people are those who affirm that you lay on something!
" truly, I shall now be able to disprove 'em."

Mrs. Du Parc. "Alas! I don't so much as know
" what they call laying on something. But where are
" these ladies going?"

Mrs. De Brè. "Give us leave, ladies, to tell you,
" *en passant*, the most agreeable news in the world.
" there's Mr. Lyfidas come to tell us that there's a
" play made against Moliere, which the grand co-
" medians are going to play."

Moliere. "'Tis true, they would have read it to me,
" and 'tis one call'd Br—Brou—Broussaut that made
" it."

Du Croisy. "Sir, 'tis posted up under the name of
" Bourfsaut; but to tell you the secret, a great many peo-
" ple have set their hand to this work, and a pretty
" high expectation ought to be conceiv'd of it. As all
" the authors and all the comedians look on Moliere as
" their greatest enemy, we are all united to do him a
" disservice; every one of us has given a stroke of the
" pencil to his picture, but we take care not to put our
" names to it: It would have been too glorious for him
" to sink in the eyes of the world, under the efforts of
" all Parnassus; and to render his defeat more ignomi-
" nious, we have chose an author without reputation on
" purpose."

Mrs. Du Parc. "For my part, I own t'ye, that I
" have all the joy at it imaginable."

Moliere. "And I too. I'gad the jester shall be jested
" on, he shall be under the claw i'faith."

Mrs. Du Parc. "That will teach him to satirize e-
" very body. What? would not the impertinent wretch
" let women have wit? does he condemn all our elevat-
" ed expressions, and pretend that we should always talk
" in a groveling manner?"

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES. 183

Mrs. De Brie. "Language is nothing; but he censures all our attachments, however innocent they may be, and according to his way of talking 'tis being criminal to have merit."

Mrs. Du Croisy. "That's insupportable; there's no woman can do any thing for the future. Why don't he leave our husbands in quiet, without opening their eyes, and making 'em take notice of things they never thought of?"

Mrs. Bejart. "All that is not worth minding, but he even satirizes virtuous women, and this wicked buffoon gives 'em the title of virtuous she-devils."

Mrs. Moliere. "'Tis an impertinent mortal, he ought to have his pennyworth of it."

Du Croisy. "The representation of this comedy, madam, will have need of being supported, and the comedians of the hotel"——

Mrs. Du Parc. "Lard, let 'em be under no apprehension; I'll venture my life on the success of their piece."

Mrs. Moliere. "You are in the right, madam, too many people are concern'd to think it good. I'll leave you to imagine if all those who think themselves satiriz'd by Moliere won't take the opportunity to be reveng'd on him by applauding this comedy."

Breacourt ironically.] "Certainly, and for my part I can answer for twelve Marquisses, six romantic ladies, twenty coquettes, and thirty cuckolds who won't fail to clap it."

Mrs. Moliere. "Indeed. Why should he go to offend all those persons, and particularly cuckolds who are the best people in the world."

Moliere. "By the stars I'm told that they'll pay off

"both him and all his comedies in a handsome manner,
 "and that all his comedians and authors, from the cedar
 "to the hyssop, are devilishly animated against him."

Mrs. Moliere. "It will fit him but right. Why does
 "he write odious pieces which all Paris go to see, and
 "wherein he describes people so well that every body
 "know themselves in 'em? Why don't he make come-
 "dies like those of Mr. Lyfidas? he would have no body
 "against him, and all the authors would speak well of
 "it. 'Tis true that such plays have not that great con-
 "course of people; but in return they are always well
 "written, no body writes against 'em, and all those that
 "see 'em are extremely desirous to think 'em good."

Du Croisy. "'Tis true I have the advantage of not
 "making myself enemies, and of having all my works
 "approv'd of by the learn'd."

Mrs. Moliere. "You do well to be satisfy'd with your
 "self. That's worth more than all the applauses of the
 "public, and than all the money which may be got by
 "Moliere's pieces. What matter is it to you whether
 "people come to your plays, provided they are approv'd
 "of by the gentlemen your brethren."

La Grange. "But when do they play the painter's
 "picture?"

Du Croisy. "I don't know but I shall be in the ut-
 "most readiness to appear in the first row, to cry out, O
 "how fine!"

Moliere. "And I too, i'gad."

La Grange. "And I likewise, as I hope to be fav'd."

Mrs. Du Parc. "For my part, I'll shew myself a
 "woman there as I ought, and answer for a bravery of
 "approbation, which shall rout all the adverse judges;

" 'tis really the least thing we ought to do, to support
" with our praises the revenger of our interests."

Mrs. Moliere. " 'Tis well said."

Mrs. De Brie. " And what we all must do."

Mrs. Bejart. " Certainly."

Mrs. Du Croisy. " Without doubt."

Mrs. Hervey. " No quarter to this mimicker of people."

Moliere. " I faith, friend Chevalier, your Moliere
" must hide himself."

Brecourt. " Who, he? I promise you, marquis, he
" intends to go upon the stage to laugh with all the others
" at the picture they have drawn of him."

Moliere. " I gad, 'twill be on the wrong side of his
" face that he'll laugh then."

Brecourt. " Come, come, perhaps he'll find more cause
" to laugh than you think of. I was shew'd the piece,
" and as every thing that's agreeable in it are actually
" the thoughts that were taken from Moliere, the joy
" which that may give will doubtless have no reason to
" displease him: for as to the part where they endeav-
" our to blacken him, I am the most deceiv'd in the
" world if it's approv'd by any body. And as to all the
" people whom they have strove to animate against him,
" because he makes, they say, portraits too like, besides
" that it has an ill look, I never saw any thing more
" ridiculous, or worse taken, and I never yet thought
" that a comedian ought to be blam'd for describing men
" too well."

La Grange. " The comedians told me they expected
" an answer from him, and that ———"

Brecourt. " An answer! faith I should think him a
" great fool if he took the pains to answer their invect-
" tives. All the world sufficiently knows from what

" motive they proceed, and the best answer he can make
 " 'em is a comedy that may succeed like all his others.
 " That's the true way of being reveng'd on 'em as he
 " ought ; and of the humour I know 'em to be, I am
 " well assur'd that a new piece, which may take away
 " people from theirs, would vex 'em more than all the
 " satires that can be made on their persons."

Moliere. " But, Chevalier ———"

Mrs. Bejart. Let me interrupt the rehearsal a little.
 [to Moliere.] Give me leave to tell you, if I had been
 in your place I'd have carry'd things otherwise. All the
 world expects a vigorous answer from you, and after the
 manner, they tell me, that you are treated in this comedy,
 you ought in justice to say every thing against the co-
 medians, and not to spare one of 'em.

Moliere. I'm provok'd to hear you talk in this man-
 ner, and this is the madness peculiar to you women ; you
 would have me take fire at once against 'em, and after
 their example go and break out immediately into in-
 vectives and abuses. A great deal of honour I should get
 by it, and a great deal of vexation I should give 'em !
 Are not they readily prepar'd for such sort of things, and
 when they are deliberating if they should play the pain-
 ter's picture for fear of an answer, did not some amongst
 'em answer, let him abuse us as much as he will provid-
 ed we can get money ? Is not that the mark of a soul
 very sensible of shame, and shall not I be well reveng'd
 of 'em by giving 'em what they are willing to receive."

Mrs. De Brie. Yet they made great complaints of
 three or four words which you said of 'em in your Criti-
 cism, and Romantic Ladies.

Moliere. 'Tis true, those three or four words are very
 offensive, and they have great reason to quote 'em. Go,

go, 'tis not that; the greatest harm I have done 'em is, that I have had the good fortune to please a little more than they could have wish'd, and all their proceeding since we came to Paris, has too well shewn what touches 'em; but let 'em do what they please, all their undertakings ought not to disquiet me. They criticise on my pieces! so much the better, and heaven forbid I should ever write one to please them; that would be a bad business for me.

Mrs. De Brie. There's no great pleasure however in seeing one's works pull'd to pieces.

Moliere. And what signifies it to me; have I not obtain'd by my comedy all I could wish to obtain by it? since it has had the happiness to please the august persons whom I particularly strive to please? have not I cause to be satisfy'd with its destiny, and don't all their censures come too late? Is it me, pray, that it regards now? and when they attack a piece that has had success, is it not rather attacking the judgment of those who approv'd it, than his skill that wrote it?

Mrs. De Brie. I'faith I should have play'd off that little *Monsieur* author, who pretends to write against those who don't trouble their heads with him.

Moliere. You're a fool. What a fine subject to divert the court Mr. Bourfault had been! I would fain know in what manner he might have been fitted out to make him entertaining; and if, were he to be ridicul'd on the stage, he would be happy enough to make people laugh. It would be too great an honour to him to be play'd before an august assembly, he would desire nothing more, and he attacks me in gaiety of heart, on purpose to make himself known, be it in what manner it will. He's a man that has nothing to lose, and the comedians would

not have set him upon me, but to engage me in a foolish quarrel, and to take me off by that artifice from the other works I have to write, and yet are you simple enough to fall all into this snare? But in short I'll make my declaration upon this point public. I don't intend to make any answer to all their criticisms and counter-criticisms: let 'em say all the bad things in the world of my pieces, I agree to it: let 'em new-make 'em after us, turn 'em like a suit of clothes to bring 'em on their stage, and endeavour to profit by what agreeableness they may find in them and by a little of my good fortune; I consent to it, they have need on't, and I should be very glad to contribute to their subsistence, provided they be contented with what I can decently grant them. Courtesy ought to have bounds, and there are things which make neither the spectators, nor him of whom they are spoken, laugh. I heartily abandon to 'em my works, my figure, my gestures, my words, my tone of voice, and my manner of reciting, to do and say what they please of 'em, if they can draw any advantage from 'em. I don't oppose any of these things, and shall be overjoy'd if this can please the world; but when I give 'em up all this, they ought to do me the favour to leave me the rest, and not to touch on things of the nature of those upon which I am told they attack me in their plays. This is what I must civilly intreat of the honest gentleman who undertakes to write for 'em, and this is all the answer they shall have from me.

Mrs. Bejart. But in short——

Moliere. But in short you'd make a fool of me. Let's talk of this no more; we amuse ourselves with talking, instead of rehearsing our play. Whereabouts were we? I can't remember.

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES. 189

Mrs. De Brie. You were at the passage —

Moliere. 'Slife! I hear a noise, the king's certainly come, and I see plainly we shan't have time to go through it. See what 'tis to fool one's time away. Well, you must do as well as you can then for the rest.

Mrs. Bejart. By my faith I'm seiz'd with fear, and can't play my part unless I rehearse it all.

Moliere. How! you can't play your part?

Mrs. Bejart. No.

Mrs. Du Parc. Nor I mine.

Mrs. De Brie. Nor I neither.

Mrs. Moliere. Nor I.

Mrs. Hervey. Nor I.

Mrs. Du Croisy. Nor I.

Moliere. What do you think to do then? Do you all make a jest of me?

SCENE IV.

BEJART, MOLIERE, LA GRANGE, DU CROISY, Mrs. DU PARC, BEJART, DE BRIE, MOLIERE, DU CROISY, HERVEY.

BEJART.

GENTLEMEN, I come to give you notice that the king's come, and waits for you to begin.

Moliere. Oh! Sir, I am in the greatest pain in the world, I am distracted at this very time I'm talking to you; these women are frighten'd, and say they must rehearse their parts before they begin. We beg one moment's favour more; the king has goodness, and he knows very well that the thing has been done in haste.

SCENE V.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, except Bejart.

MOLIERE.

OH! Pray try to recover yourselves; take courage,
I beg of you.

Mrs. Du Parc. You should go and excuse yourself.

Molierc. How should I excuse myself?

SCENE VI.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A BUSY-BODY.

A BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Molierc. Presently, Sir. I believe I shall lose my
senses in this business here, and—

SCENE VII.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, A SECOND
BUSY-BODY.

A SECOND BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Molierc. In a moment, Sir. [To his companions.]
What, would you have me have the assurance—

THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES. 151

SCENE VIII.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, **A THIRD BUSY-BODY.**

A THIRD BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Molier. Yes, Sir; we are going to't. How officious these people are to come and bid us begin, when the king did not order them to do it!

SCENE IX.

MOLIERE, and the same actors, **A FOURTH BUSY-BODY.**

A FOURTH BUSY-BODY.

GENTLEMEN, begin.

Molier. 'Tis done, Sir. What then! shall I have the confusion——

SCENE THE LAST.

BEJART, **MOLIERE**, and the same actors.

MOLIERE.

SIR, you are come to bid us begin, but ——

Bejart. No, gentlemen, I come to tell you that the king has been inform'd of the perplexity you are in,

192 THE IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES.

and by a very particular goodness defers your new comedy till another time, and contents himself for the present with the first you can give him.

Moliere. Oh! Sir, you give me new life; the king does us the greatest favour in the world by giving us time for what he desir'd; and we'll all go and thank him for the extreme goodness he shews us.

SCENE IX.

7 MAY 55

THE END.

SCENE THE LAST.

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ing
me
for

THE

MAN-HATER.

COMEDY.

VOL. II.

I

A C T O R S.

ALCESTES, in love with Celimene.

PHILINTES, friend to Alcestes.

ORONTES, in love with Celimene.

CELIMENE, in love with Alcestes.

ELIANTE, cousin to Celimene.

ARSINOE, friend to Celimene.

ACASTES,

} Marquises.

CLITANDER,

BASQUE, servant to Celimene.

A GUARD of the court of the marshals of France.

DU BOIS, servant to Alcestes.



SCENE, PARIS in Celimene's house.

THE
M A N - H A T E R.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

PHILINTES, ALCESTES.

PHILINTES.

WHAT'S the matter? What ails you?

Alcestes sitting.] Pray leave me.

Philintes. But once more tell me, what
whim —

Alcestes. Leave me, I say, and go hide yourself.

Philintes. But you might hear people at least, without being angry.

Alcestes. I will be angry, and I won't hear.

Philintes. I can't comprehend you in your hasty humours; and in short, tho' a friend, I am one of the first —

Alcestes rising hastily.] I, your friend? Strike that out o' your books. I have hitherto profess'd myself to be so; but after what I have now discover'd in you, I flatly declare to you that I am so no longer; I'll have no place in corrupt hearts.

Philintes. I am guilty then, Alcestes, in your account.

Alcestes. Go, you ought to die with mere shame, there's no excusing such an action, and every man of honour ought to be shock'd at it. I see you stifle a man with caresses, and profess the utmost tenderness for him; you over-charge the transport of your embraces with protestations, offers, and oaths: and when I afterwards ask you, who is this man, you scarce can tell me what his name is. Your hot fit's all over the moment you are parted, and you treat him, to me, as a person absolutely indifferent. 'Sdeath! 'tis an unworthy, base, infamous thing, so far to demean one's self, as to act contrary to one's own sentiments: and if, by ill-luck, I had done as much, I should have gone that instant, and hang'd myself for vexation.

Philintes. I don't see, for my part, that this is a hanging matter, and I shall petition you, that you wou'd graciously think fit, that I mitigate a little the severity of your sentence, and with your leave, not hang myself for this fact.

Alcestes. How awkwardly this raillery sits upon you!

Philintes. But seriously, what wou'd you have one do?

Alcestes. I wou'd have you be sincere, and like a man of honour, let no word slip, which comes not from the heart.

Philintes. When a man comes and embraces you with joy; you should in reason pay him in the same coin, answer his eagerness as one can, return him offer for offer, and oaths for oaths.

Alcestes. No, I can't endure that base method, which the generality of your people of mode affect; and I hate nothing so much, as the contortions of all those great protestation-mongers, those affable dealers in frivolous embraces, those obliging utterers of empty words, who

attack every body with civilities, and treat the man of worth and the coxcomb with the same air. What good does it do you, for a man to carefs you, swear amity, faith, zeal, esteem, tenderness, and make a grand elogium upon you, when he runs to do the same to the first scoundrel he meets? No, no, there's not a soul of the least good disposition will accept an esteem so prostituted, and the most illustrious will have but a poor relish, when one finds one is blended with the whole universe: esteem is founded on some preference, and to esteem all the world, is to esteem no body. Since you give into these vices of the times, i'faith you are not calculated to be one of my companions; I refuse the vast complaisance of a heart, which makes no difference of merit; I wou'd have people distinguish me; and, to cut the matter short, a friend to all mankind is no friend for me.

Philintes. But whilst we are of the world, 'tis necessary that we pay some outward civilities which custom demands.

Alcestes. No, I tell ye we ought to chastise, without mercy, that shameful commerce of appearances of friendship: I would have us be men, and think that on all occasions the very bottom of our hearts should shew it self in our discourse; that it should be that which speaks, and that our sentiments should never be masqu'd under vain compliments.

Philintes. There are a good many occasions, in which an absolute frankness would be ridiculous, and hardly be endur'd; and sometimes, no offence to your austere honour, 'tis right to conceal what we have in our hearts. Would it be proper or decent to tell thousands o' people what we think of 'em? when we have to do with a man

we hate, or who is disagreeable to us, ought we to declare the matter to him, just as it is?

Alcestes. Yes.

Philintes. What! would you tell the antiquated Emilia, that it ill becomes her, at her age, to set up for a beauty? and that the white she lays on so thick, is shocking to every body?

Alcestes. Without doubt.

Philintes. Or Dorilas, that he's too impertinent? And that there is not an ear at court which he does not tire in recounting his bravery, and the splendor of his family?

Alcestes. Very right.

Philintes. You jest sure.

Alcestes. I don't jest; and I shall spare no body in this point. My eyes are too much offended; neither court, nor city present me with any thing but objects to provoke my spleen. It throws me into a melancholy humour, a profound chagrin, when I see men converse together in the manner they do; I find nothing any where, but base flattery, but injustice, interest, treachery, and knavery; I can hold no longer, I'm distracted, and have taken up a resolution to break abruptly with all mankind.

Philintes. This sour philosophy is a little too savage; I can't help laughing to see you in these gloomy fits; and methinks I see in us two, who have been brought up together, the two brothers, which The school for husbands describes, of whom ———

Alcestes. Pray, let's ha' done with your insipid comparisons.

Philintes. No, truly, leave you off all these rude insults. The world won't alter its ways, for all your pains, and since frankness has such charms with you, I shall tell you frankly that this distemper o' yours is as good as

a comedy, wherever you go: and that such a mighty wrath against the manners of the age, makes you ridiculous with a great many people.

Alcestes. So much the better, 'sdeath, so much the better; that's what I want, 'tis a good sign, and I'm overjoy'd at it; all men are to such a degree odious to me, that I should be sorry to be wise in their eyes.

Philintes. You wish very ill then to human nature?

Alcestes. Yes, I have conceiv'd a horrible aversion to it.

Philintes. Shall all poor mortals, without any exception, be involv'd in this aversion? Besides, are there not some in our age——

Alcestes. No, 'tis general, and I hate all men: Some, because they are wicked and mischievous; and others, for being complaisant to the wicked, and not having that vigorous hatred for 'em, which vice ought to give to all virtuous minds. One sees the unjust excess of this complaisance to that sheer villain, with whom I have a lawsuit; the treacherous rascal is plainly seen thro' his mask; he is every where known for what he is; his rolling eyes and soft tone impose only upon strangers. People know that this wretched fellow, who richly deserves the gallows, has push'd himself into the world by dirty jobs, and that the splendid condition these have brought him to, makes merit repine and virtue blush; whatever shameful titles persons every where give him, his wretched honour sees no body on its side; call him infamous knave and cursed villain, all the world agrees to't, and no body contradicts it. In the mean time his grimace is every where welcome, they entertain him, smile upon him, he insinuates himself into all companies: and if there is any rank to be disputed by canvassing, you'll see him carry

it over a man of the greatest worth. Plague! these are to me mortal wounds, to see men keep any measures with vice; I am strongly mov'd to fly into some desert to avoid all approach of human creatures.

Philintes. Lack-a-day! Let us give our selves less trouble about the manners of the age, and make some small allowances to human nature; let us not examine it with so great rigour, but look upon it's defects with some indulgence. This world requires a tractable virtue; one may be blame-worthy by stress of wisdom, right reason avoids every extremity, and would have us be wise with sobriety. That great stiffness in the virtues of ancient times, too much shocks our age and common usage; it wou'd have mortals too perfect; we must yield to the times without obstinacy, and 'tis an extremity of folly to busy our selves in correcting the world. I observe, as you do, a thousand things every day, which might go better, taking another course; but whatever I may discover in every transaction, people don't see me in a rage, like you: I take men with great calmness, just as they are, I accustom myself to bear with what they do; and I think that at court as well as in the city, my flegm is as much a philosopher as your choler.

Alcestes. But this flegm, Sir, which reasons so nicely, this same flegm, can nothing ruffle it? Should it happen by chance that a friend should betray you, that a subtil plot were form'd to get your estate, or that people shou'd endeavour to spread ill reports of you, could you see all this, without putting yourself in a passion.

Philintes. Yes, I look upon these defects that you make such a noise about, as vices link'd with human nature; and in short my mind, is no more shock'd to see

a man a knave, unjust, dishonest, selfish, than to see a vultur ravenous after carnage, apes mischievous, and wolves full of rage.

Alcestes. Shall I see myself betray'd, tore to pieces, robb'd, without being———Plague! I won't talk at all, this is such an impertinent way of reasoning.

Philintes. Faith, you will do well to hold your tongue. Exclaim something less against your antagonist, and bestow part o' your care on your law-suit.

Alcestes. I won't bestow any upon it, I have said it.

Philintes. But who then do you expect should solicit for you?

Alcestes. Who do I expect? Reason, my just right, equity.

Philintes. Shall you pay no visit to any of the judges.

Alcestes. No; what, is my cause unjust, or dubious?

Philintes. I grant ye, but canvassing is a plaguy thing, and ——

Alcestes. No, I am determin'd not to move one step. I am in the wrong, or I am in the right.

Philintes. Don't you trust to that.

Alcestes. I shan't stir.

Philintes. Your adversary is strong, and may by caballing draw ——

Alcestes. It signifies nothing.

Philintes. You'll be deceiv'd.

Alcestes. Be it so. I'll see the success of it.

Philintes. But ——

Alcestes. I shall have the pleasure to lose my suit.

Philintes. But in short ——

Alcestes. I shall see by this trial, whether men will have impudence enough, will be wicked, villanous, perverse enough to do me injustice, in the face of all the world.

Philintes. What a strange man!

Alcestes. I wish, tho' it cost me a great deal, that for the pleasantness of the thing, I had lost my cause.

Philintes. In good earnest, Alcestes, people wou'd laugh at you, did they hear you talk in this manner.

Alcestes. So much the worse for him that laugh'd.

Philintes. But this rectitude, which you require in every thing with so much exactness, this absolute integrity, that you intrench your self in, do you find it in the person you are in love with? I'm astonish'd, for my part, that since, as it shou'd seem, you and human nature are by the ears together, yet in spite of all that can render it odious to you, you should have found that in it which charms your eyes. And what surprises me still the more, is that strange choice your heart is fix'd upon: The sincere Eliante has an inclination for you, the prude Arsinoe casts a sheep's-eye upon you; in the mean time your heart rejects their passion, whilst Celimene amuses it in her chains; whose coquettish humour and slanderous temper seem to give in so strongly to the manners of the times. Whence comes it, that bearing so mortal a hatred to these, you should easily bear with such a degree of 'em as this fair one possesses? Are they no longer defects in so sweet an object? Don't you see them? Or do you excuse 'em?

Alcestes. No, the passion I have for this young widow, does not shut my eyes against the defects one sees in her, and with what ardour soever she may have inspir'd me, I am the first to see them, as I am to condemn them. But, with all this, do what I can, I confess my foible, she has the art of pleasing me: in vain I see her faults, in vain I blame them, in spite of me she makes me love her; her agreeableness turns the scale, and without doubt

my affection will be able to rid her mind of these vices of the times.

Philintes. If you do that, you do not do a little. You believe then, that you are belov'd by her?

Alcestes. Yes, troth, I should not love her at all, if I did not think so.

Philintes. But if her affection for you discovers itself plainly, whence comes it that your rivals give you so much uneasiness?

Alcestes. 'Tis because a heart thoroughly smitten, wou'd have the person wholly to itself; and I come here only with the design of telling her every thing my passion inspires me with upon that head.

Philintes. For my part, had I nothing to do but give way to love, her cousin Eliante should have all my sighs; her heart which esteems you, is solid and sincere; and this choice which is more agreeable, wou'd be more for your interest.

Alcestes. It's true, my reason daily tells me so: But reason is not what governs love.

Philintes. I'm terribly afraid for this love of yours, and the hopes you have may —

SCENE II.

ORONTES, ALCESTES, PHILINTES.

ORONTES to Alcestes.

I WAS inform'd below, that Eliante and Celimene were both gone abroad to make some purchase: But as they told me you were here, I came up to assure you, with a sincere heart, that I have conceiv'd an incredible

esteem for you; and that for a long time, this esteem has given me an ardent desire to be in the number of your friends. Yes, my heart loves to do justice to merit, and I ardently long that the bond of friendship might unite us: I think that a friend who is zealous, and of my quality too, is certainly not to be rejected. [During this time Alcestes appears in a musing posture, and seems not to know that Orontes speaks to him.] 'Tis to you, [to Alcestes.] if you please, that this discourse is address'd.

Alcestes. To me, Sir?

Orontes. To you. Is it offensive to you?

Alcestes. Not at all, but my surprise is very great, and I did not expect the honour I receive.

Orontes. The esteem I hold you in, ought not by any means to surprise you, you may claim it from the whole universe.

Alcestes. Sir——

Orontes. The whole kingdom contains nothing which is not below the shining merit the world discovers in you.

Alcestes. Sir——

Orontes. Yes, for my part, I hold you preferable to every thing that I perceive the most considerable in it.

Alcestes. Sir——

Orontes. May the sky crush me if I lye; and, to confirm you in my sentiments, permit me with an open heart to embrace you, and to demand a place in your friendship. Your hand, if you please. You promise me your friendship?

Alcestes. Sir——

Orontes. What! do ye refuse?

Alcestes. Sir, 'tis too much honour you design me. But friendship demands something more of mystery, and

'tis certainly to profane the name, to think of bringing it upon all occasions. This union must spring from judgment and choice; before we engage ourselves, 'tis necessary we should be better acquainted, and we may possibly be of such complexions, that we may both of us heartily repent of the bargain.

Orontes. P'gad, this is talking upon the affair like a man of sense, and I esteem you still the more for it; let us leave it to time then, to form so delightful an union. But in the mean while, I make you an intire offer of myself; if I am to ask any favour for you at court, the world knows I make some figure near the king; I have his ear, and faith, he always treats me with all the freedom in the world. In short, I am in all respects absolutely yours: And as you are a man of bright parts, I come, by way of commencing this agreeable union, to shew you a song, which I made a little while ago, and to know whether 'tis fit I should expose it to the public.

Alcestes. Sir, I am a very unfit person to decide the affair, be so good to excuse me.

Orontes. Why so?

Alcestes. I have the weakness of being a little more sincere in this case than I should be.

Orontes. The very thing I ask; I should have room for complaint, if exposing myself to you that you might speak without dissimulation, you should deceive me, and hide any thing from me in disguise.

Alcestes. Since you are pleas'd to have it so, Sir, I am very willing.

Orontes. A song.—'Tis a song. *Hope*—'Tis a lady who had flatter'd my passion with some hope. *Hope*—These are none of your grand pompous verses, but your slighter verses, soft, tender, and languishing.

Alcestes. We shall see.

Orontes. *Hope* — I don't know whether the stile may appear sufficiently clear and easy ; and whether you will be satisfy'd with the choice of the words.

Alcestes. We shall see presently, Sir.

Orontes. Besides, you must know that I took up no longer time than a quarter of an hour in making of 'em.

Alcestes. Let us see, Sir, the time makes nothing to the purpose.

Orontes. *Hope, for a while, allays, 'tis true,*

And rocks to sleep our tedious pain :

But, Phillis, poor gain must accrue,

When nothing marches in its train.

Philintes. I am charm'd already with this little taste.

Alcestes softly.] What! have you the assurance to admire this?

Orontes. *You shew'd indeed great complaisance,*

Less had been better, take my word ;

Why shou'd you be at that expence,

When hope was all you could afford?

Philintes. O! in what galant terms these things are couch'd!

Alcestes softly.] O fy! vile complaisance! you praise things that are stupid.

Orontes. *But if an endless expectation,*

Push to the last extreme my passion,

Death must be my reliever.

Nor, to prevent this, serves your care ;

Fair Phillis, 'tis downright despair ;

When we must hope for ever.

Philintes. The conclusion is pretty, amorous, admirable.

Alcestes softly.] Plague o' your conclusion! Deuce

take that poison'd tongue! wou'd you had concluded your head off!

Philintes. I never heard verses so well turn'd.

Alcestes softly.] 'Sdeath——

Orontes to Philintes.] You flatter me, and you think perhaps——

Philintes. No, I don't flatter at all.

Alcestes softly.] Heh! What d'ye then, treacherous creature?

Orontes to Alcestes.] But now for you, you know the agreement we made; pray, speak with sincerity.

Alcestes. Sir, this is always a most delicate affair, and in point of genius, we love people should flatter us: But I was saying one day to a certain person who shall be nameless, seeing some verses of his composition, that it is necessary a fine gentleman should always have a great command over that itch of writing which we are so apt to catch; that he shou'd keep a strait rein over the great propensity one has to make a shew with such amusements; and that people are expos'd, by the eagerness of shewing their works, to make but a very scurvy figure.

Orontes. What, wou'd you have me understand by this, that I am wrong to pretend——

Alcestes. I don't say that: But I told him that a heavy composition does a person's business, that there needs no other foible to disgrace a man; and that though they had in other respects a hundred fine qualities, yet we view people on their weak sides.

Orontes. D'ye mean that you have any objection to my song?

Alcestes. I don't say that; but that he shou'd not write, I set before his eyes how, in our time, this thirst has spoil'd many very worthy people.

Orontes. What, do I write ill? and should I resemble them?

Alcestes. I don't say that: But in short, says I to him, what occasion so urgent have you to rhyme? and who the deuce drives you into print? if one could pardon the sending a bad book into the world, it wou'd only be in those wretches who compose for a livelihood. Take my advice, withstand your present intentions, keep such business as this from public view, and don't throw away what people challenge from you, the reputation which you have at court of a worthy gentleman, to receive by the hands of a greedy printer, that of a ridiculous and wretched author. This is what I endeavour'd to make him comprehend.

Orontes. Admirably well put; and I think I understand you. But mayn't I know what it is in my song, that——

Alcestes. Frankly, 'tis a very good one to lock up in your scrutoir; you have been govern'd by villanous models, and your expressions are not at all natural. Pray what is, *And rocks to sleep our tedious pain?*

And what, *When nothing marches in its train!*

What, *Why should you be at that expence,*

When hope was all you could afford?

And that, *Fair Phillis, 'tis downright despair,*

When we must hope for ever?

This figurative stile, that people are so vain of, is wide of all just character, and of truth; 'tis nothing but playing with words, pure affectation, and 'tis not thus that nature speaks. The wretched taste of the age in this case is horrible: Our forefathers, unpolish'd as they were, had a much better one; and I take all this that people

admire, to be much inferior to an old ballad, that I am going to repeat to you :

Had royal Henry ygiven to me

His Paris large and fair,

And I straightway must quit for aye,

The love of my own dear ;

I'd say, pardie, my liege Henry,

Take back your Paris fair ;

Much mo love I my dear, truly,

Much mo love I my dear.

The versification is not rich, and the stile is antiquated. But don't you see that this is infinitely better than such gew-gaw stuff as good sense would despise? And that pure nature speaks here void of art.

Had royal Henry ygiven to me

His Paris large and fair,

And I straightway must quit for aye,

The love of my own dear ;

I'd say, pardie, my liege Henry,

Take back your Paris fair ;

Much mo love I my dear, truly,

Much mo love I my dear.

This is what a heart may say, that's really smitten. [To Philintes laughing.] Yes, Mr. Sneerer, in spite of all your Beaux esprits, I value this more than all the flourishing fustian of the tinsel, which people so generally cry up.

Orontes. And I maintain that my verses are very good.

Alcestes. You have your reasons to think 'em so ; but you will please to allow me to have others which wou'd be excus'd from submitting to yours.

Orontes 'Tis sufficient for me that I see other people value them.

Alcestes. 'Tis because they have the art of dissimulation; and I have not.

Orontes. Do you think you have so great a share of wit?

Alcestes. If I commended your verses I should have more.

Orontes. I shall be very well satisfy'd without your approbation.

Alcestes. 'Twill be very expedient, if you please, that you should be satisfy'd without it.

Orontes. I should be very glad, for trial, that you wou'd compose some verses upon the same subject after your manner.

Alcestes. I might unluckily make as bad ones; but I should take care how I shew'd 'em to people.

Orontes. You speak to me with a great deal of assurance, and this sufficiency——

Alcestes. Pray seek somebody else to flatter you, and not me.

Orontes. But, my little Sir, don't be so much in your altitudes.

Alcestes. Faith, my great Sir, I am just as much in my altitudes as I should be.

Philintes stepping between them.] Nay, gentlemen, that is carrying the matter too far, pray, have done with it.

Orontes. I'm in the wrong, I confess it, and I quit the place: I am your slave, Sir, with all my heart.

Alcestes. And I am, Sir, your humble servant.

SCENE III.

PHILINTES, ALCESTES.

PHILINTES.

WELL, you see; by being too sincere, you had like to have had a troublesome affair upon your hands; and I saw that Orontes wanted to be flatter'd, when——

Alcestes. Don't speak to me.

Philintes. But——

Alcestes. No more society.

Philintes. 'Tis too much——

Alcestes. Leave me.

Philintes. IF I——

Alcestes. No more words.

Philintes. But how——

Alcestes. I hear nothing.

Philintes. But——

Alcestes. Again?

Philintes. This is an outrageous——

Alcestes. 'Sdeath, this is too much, don't follow me at the heels.

Philintes. You joke with me, I sha'n't leave you.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ALCESTES, CELIMENE.

ALCESTES.

MADAM, would you have me be plain with you?

I am very much dissatisfy'd with your manner of behaviour: it encreases my choler too much when I think of it, and I perceive 'tis necessary we should break

with each other. Yes, I should deceive you to talk otherwise, sooner or latter we must break, that's without dispute; and I might promise you the contrary a thousand times, but I should not have it in my power to do it.

Celimene. 'Tis in order to scold me then, I perceive, that you were pleas'd to wait upon me home?

Alcestes. I don't scold; but your humour, madam, opens too easy an access in your heart to the first-comer; one sees too many lovers laying siege to you, and my mind can by no means be reconcil'd to this.

Celimene. Will you needs have me to blame for gaining lovers? Can I hinder people from thinking me handsome? And when they make tender efforts to visit me, ought I to take a stick and beat 'em out o' doors.

Alcestes. No, 'tis not a stick, madam, you want, but a heart less yielding, and less melting at their love-tales. I know you are surrounded with charms, go where you will, but the reception you give 'em retains the persons your eyes attract; and that gentleness which offers itself to those who throw down their arms, finishes in every heart the work which your charms had begun. The too gay hope you inspire 'em with, fixes their assiduous attendance about you; and a complaisance in you, something less extensive, would drive away that great croud of admirers. But, however, tell me, madam, by what chance your Clitander has the happiness to please you so much? Upon what fund of merit and sublime virtue do you ground the honour of your esteem? Is it by the long nail he has upon his little finger, that he has gain'd the great esteem with you, which we see him have? Did you surrender, with all the *beau monde*, to the shining merit of his fair periwig? Or are they his large panta-

loons, that make you in love with him? Has the huge collection of ribbands the knack of charming you? Is it by the allurements of his vast rhingrave, that he has gain'd your heart, whilst he was acting the part of your slave? Or has his manner of laughing, and his soft tone of voice found the secret of touching you?

Celimene. How unjustly do you take umbrage at him! Don't you very well know why I keep fair with him? That he can interest all his friends in my law-suit, as he has actually promis'd me to do?

Alcestes. Lose your law-suit, madam, with firmness of mind, and don't keep fair with a rival, who is offensive to me.

Celimene. But you are grown jealous of all the world.

Alcestes. 'Tis because all the world is kindly receiv'd by you.

Celimene. That's the very thing which ought to calm that wild spirit of yours, since my complaisance diffuses itself to all; and you wou'd have more room to be offended, should you see me taken up intirely with one.

Alcestes. But as to me whom you blame so much for jealousy, what have I more than the rest of them, pray madam?

Celimene. The happiness to know that you are belov'd.

Alcestes. But what room has my inflam'd heart to believe that?

Celimene. I think that as I have taken the pains to tell you so, a confession of that kind should be sufficient for you.

Alcestes. But who shall assure me at the same time, that you mayn't say quite as much, perhaps, to every body else?

Celimene. A pretty, amorous speech this, truly, for a lover to make; and you treat me in a galant manner here. Well, to remove from you a suspicion of this na-

ture, I here unsay all that I have said : and nothing can deceive you more than yourself. Rest satisfy'd.

Alcestes. 'Sheart, must I then love you? Oh? could I once again recover this heart o' mine out o' your hands, I wou'd bless heaven for the singular happiness! I make no secret of it, I do all that's possible to break this cruel attachment of my heart; but my greatest efforts have hitherto done nothing, and 'tis for my sins that I love you thus.

Celimene. 'Tis very true, your love for me is unparallel'd.

Alcestes. Yes, upon that head I can defy all the world. My love is inconceivable, and never, madam, did any man love as I do.

Celimene. In good truth, the method of it is entirely new, for you love people to pick a quarrel with 'em; and your passion breaks out only in peevish expressions, never did any body see such a growling lover.

Alcestes. But it only sticks with you, whether this chagrin shall vanish; I beg of you, let's cut short all our debates, let us converse with open heart, and see to put a stop——

SCENE II.

CEIMENE, ALCESTES, BASQUE.

CEIMENE.

WHAT'S the matter?

Basque. Acastes is below.

Celimene. Well, bid him come up.

SCENE III.

CECIMENE, ALCESTES.

ALCESTES.

WHAT! can one never have a little private conversation with you? Must one find you always ready to receive company? And can't you resolve only for one moment to suffer yourself to be deny'd?

Cecimene. Wou'd you have me quarrel with him?

Alcestes. You have that regard for people, which by no means is agreeable to me.

Cecimene. He's a man wou'd never forgive me, shou'd he know that his visits had been troublesome to me.

Alcestes. And what signifies that to you, to plague yourself in this manner——

Cecimene. Lack-a-day! the good-will of such as he, is of importance, and these are a sort of people, who have, I don't know how, usurp'd the privilege of talking loud at court: One sees they introduce themselves into all conversations; they can do you no good, but they may do you harm; and whatever support one may have besides, one should never embroil one's self with these very noisy fellows.

Alcestes. In short, be the matter as it will, and whatever foundation one goes upon, you always find reasons to entertain all the world; and the precautions of your judgment ——

SCENE IV.

ALCESTES, CELIMENE, BASQUE.

BASQUE.

HERE'S Clitander too, madam.

Alcestes. Mighty right.

Celimene. Whither d'ye run?

Alcestes. Out o' doors.

Celimene. Stay.

Alcestes. What for?

Celimene. Stay.

Alcestes. I can't.

Celimene. I wou'd have you.

Alcestes. I won't. These conversations do nothing but weary me, and 'tis unreasonable to desire me to endure 'em.

Celimene. I say you shall, you shall.

Alcestes. No, 'tis impossible for me.

Celimene. Well, go, be gone, you are at your full liberty.

SCENE V.

ELIANTE, PHILINTES, ACASTES, CLITANDER,
ALCESTES, CELIMENE, BASQUE.

ELIANTE to Celimene.

HERE are the two Marquises a-coming up with us: did any body tell you of it?

Celimene. Yes; chairs here for every body. [To Alcestes.] What, a'n't you gone?

Alcestes.

Alcestes. No ; but I'm resolv'd, madam, to make you explain your mind, either for them, or for me.

Celimene. Hold your tongue.

Alcestes. You shall explain your self this very day.

Celimene. You're out o' your wits.

Alcestes. No, you shall declare your self.

Celimene. Nay ———

Alcestes. You must take one side, or t'other.

Celimene. You jest, sure.

Alcestes. No, but you must make your choice, I've had patience too long.

Clitander. I'gad, madam, I'm just come from court, where Cleontes appear'd at the levee most ridiculously finish'd out. Has he ne'er a friend to give him the light of a little charitable advice upon his behaviour?

Celimene. To say the truth, he loses himself strangely in the world ; he carries an air with him wherever he goes, that immediately strikes the eye ; and when one sees him again, after a short absence, one still finds him more full of his extravagances.

Acastes. I'gad, if you must talk of extravagant people, I've just now been teiz'd by a most tedious one ; that reasoner Damon who kept me, an't please ye, a full hour out o' my chaise, in the heat of the sun.

Celimene. 'Tis a strange tittle-tattle, and then he has always the art, with a great deal of discourse, of saying nothing to you. There's never any thing in the arguments he holds, and all we hear is nothing but noise.

[Eliante to Philintes.] This is no bad beginning. The conversation takes a fine turn enough against one's neighbour.

Clitander. Timantes too is an admirable character, madam !

Celimene. 'Tis a mortal, from head to foot, entirely a mystery, who casts a wild glance upon you in passing, and is always busy without any thing to do. Every thing he utters abounds with grimace: he quite oppresses you by force o' ceremony; he has ever, to break off the conversation, a secret to whisper to you, and that secret is—nothing; he makes a miracle of the least trifle, and speaks every thing in your ear, even to a *good-morrow*.

Acastes. And Gerald, madam?

Celimene. O the tedious romancer! He never descends below his grand air of a lord, he's perpetually mingling himself with the highest company, and never cites ye any thing less than a duke, a prince or princess. quality perfectly turns his head, and all his discourse turns upon nothing but horses, equipage, and dogs; he *thous* and *thees* people of highest rank, when he speaks to 'em, and the name of Sir is quit obsolete with him.

Clitander. They tell you that he is all in all with Belisa.

Celimene. Poor spirited wretch! and the driest company! I suffer martyrdom when she comes to visit me. One must sweat perpetually to find out what to say to her, and the barrenness of her expression lets the conversation die at every turn. In vain do you call in the aid of all your common-place stuff, to attack her stupid silence; the fine weather, and the rain, and the cold, and the heat, are funds that one presently drains with her. At the same time, her visits, insupportable enough of 'emselves, are drawn out also to a hideous length; and one may ask what's-a-clock, and yawn twenty times, yet no more will she stir than if she were a log of wood.

Acastes. What think ye of Adrastus?

Celimene. Oh! Pride to extremity! a man puff'd up

with the love of himself; his merit is never satisfy'd with the court, he makes a daily trade of railing at it, and there's not an employment, charge, or benefice they give away, without doing injustice to the considerable person he fancies himself to be.

Clitander. But the young Cleon, whom all the people of fashion now visit, what say you of him?

Celimene. That he has gain'd his merit from his cook, and 'tis his table that people pay their visits to.

Eliante. He takes care to have the most delicate of provisions serv'd there.

Celimene. Yes, but I should be very glad he wou'd not serve himself up there; that same stupid person of his is a villanous dish, and it spoils, to my taste, all the entertainment he gives you.

Philintes. His uncle Damis is generally very much esteem'd; what say you of him, madam?

Celimene. Oh! he's one of my friends.

Philintes. I take him to be a worthy man, and of good sense enough in appearance.

Celimene. Yes — but, what makes me mad is, he will needs have too much wit; he's ever upon the high strain; and one sees him labouring to be witty in every thing he says. Since he has took it into his head to be that clever man, nothing can hit his taste, he's so difficult; he will needs see faults in every thing one writes; and thinks that to praise is not to be a man of wit; that it is learned to find fault, and that it only belongs to fools to admire and to laugh; and that in not approving any of the works of the age, he gives himself a superiority to all other people. Even in conversation he finds something to carp at, the discourse is too low for him to condescend to; and with his arms a-cross, he looks down

with pity from the height of his genius, upon all that every body says.

Acastes. A true portrait of him, split me.

Clitander to Celimene.] You have an admirable hand at painting people to the life.

Alcestes. Courage, steady, on my brave friends of the court, you spare nothing, and every one has his turn. In the mean time, let but any one of these persons appear, and we shall see you run hastily to meet him, give him your hand, and with a flattering kiss back it with oaths, that you are his humble servant.

Clitander. Why do you apply your self to us? If what is said offends you, the charge must be directed to the lady.

Alcestes. No, 'sdeath, 'tis to you; and your fawning laughs draw from her all these slanderous reflections; her satirical humour is constantly fed by the criminal incense of your flattery; her mind wou'd find fewer charms in raillery, had she observ'd that people did not applaud it. Thus 'tis to flatterers, that one ought every where to impute the vices that overspread human nature.

Philintes. But why so greatly interested for these people, you who wou'd your self condemn what is blam'd in 'em?

Celimene. And must not the gentleman contradict, indeed? would you have him confine himself to the common opinion? And not display in all places the contradicting spirit that heav'n has blest him with? The sentiment of another can never please him, he always takes the contrary opinion in hand, and he would think he had the appearance of a common person, shou'd he be observ'd to be of any body's opinion but his own. The honour of contradiction has such charms with him, that

he very frequently takes up arms against himself; and falls foul on his own sentiments, as soon as ever he discovers 'em in the mouth of another.

Alcestes. The laughers are on your side, madam, that's saying every thing; and you may push your satire as far as you please against me.

Philintes. But 'tis very true too, that your way is to bluster at every thing one says; and by a peevishness, which itself avows, can neither bear that one shou'd blame or praise.

Alcestes. 'Sdeath, 'tis because men are never in the right, because being peevish with 'em is always in season, and because I see that in all affairs they praise impertinently, or censure rashly.

Celimene. But —

Alcestes. No, madam, no, tho' I were to die for't, you have diversions that I can't bear with; and they are in the wrong here to cherish in your mind that strong adherence to faults which they themselves blame in you.

Clitander. For my part, I don't know; but I loudly declare I always thought hitherto that the lady was without fault.

Acastes. With graces and attractions I see her well stor'd, but for faults, they don't fall under my observation.

Alcestes. But they do under mine, and so far am I from concealing 'em, she knows I take care to reproach her with 'em. The more we love any person, the less we should flatter them; true love shews itself by giving no quarter; and for my part, I wou'd banish all those mean-spirited lovers, whom I found submissive to all my sentiments, and whose faint-hearted complaisance wou'd offer incense to all my extravagances.

Celimene. In short, were you to be umpire of hearts,

to be rightly in love, one ought to renounce all tenderness; and to place the supreme honour of a perfect passion in railing handsomly at the persons we love.

Eliante. Love, for the generality, is but little regulated by these rules, and lovers are always observ'd to extol their choice: Never does their passion see any thing to be blam'd in it, and every thing to them becomes amiable in the object belov'd; they reckon blemishes as perfections, and know how to give favourable names to 'em. The pale vies with the jessamy in fairness, the black, even to a frightful degree, is an adorable brunet; the lean has shape and easiness; the fat has a portliness full of majesty; the naturally flattern who has few charms, is plac'd under the name of a negligent beauty; the giant is a goddess in their eyes; the dwarf an epitome of all heav'n's wonders; the haughty has a soul worthy of a diadem; the cheat has wit; the fool is all good-nature; the over-talkative has agreeable humour; and the dumb preserves a decent modesty. 'Tis thus that a lover, in the extremity of his passion, loves even the very faults of those he is enamour'd with.

Alcestes. And, for my part, I maintain —

Celimene. Let's drop this discourse, and take a turn of two in the gallery. What! are you going, gentlemen?

Clitander and Acastes.] No, madam.

Alcestes. You are mightily taken up with the fear of their going; go when you please, gentlemen; but I give you notice that I shan't go hence 'till you are gone.

Acastes. Did I not think I shou'd be troublesome to the lady, I have nothing to call me hence the whole day.

Clitander. As for me, provided I am but soon enough to attend the king at his going to bed, I have no affair else to engage me.

Celimene to Alcestes.] You only joke, I fancy.

Alcestes. No, not in the least. We shall see whether I am the person you want to have gone.

SCENE VI.

ALCESTES, CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ACASTES,
PHILINTES, CLITANDER, BASQUE.

BASQUE to Alcestes.

SIR, here's a man wants to speak with you about an affair which he says will admit of no delay.

Alcestes. Tell him, I have no such urgent affairs.

Basque. He has a jacket on with large plaited skirts, lac'd with gold lace.

Celimene to Alcestes.] Go see what he wants, or bid him come in.

SCENE VII.

ALCESTES, CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ACASTES,
PHILINTES, CLITANDER, a GUARD.

ALCESTES going up to the guard.

WELL then, what's your pleasure? come hither, Sir.

Guard. Sir, I want to speak a word or two with you.

Alcestes. You may speak aloud, Sir, to let me know what it is.

Guard. The marshals of France, whose commands I am charg'd with, order you, Sir, to come and appear before them immediately.

Alcestes. Who? me, Sir?

Guard. Yourself, Sir.

Alcestes. And what for?

Philintes to Alcestes.] 'Tis the ridiculous affair between you and Orontes.

Celimene to Philintes.] How?

Philintes. Orontes and he affronted one another just now about some trifling verses he did not approve of, and they want to quash the thing in its infancy.

Alcestes. I shall never shew any base compliance.

Philintes. But you must obey order, come, get ready—

Alcestes. What accommodation wou'd they propose between us? Shall the vote of these gentlemen condemn me to approve the verses which are the occasion of our quarrel? I won't unsay what I have said; I think 'em villainous.

Philintes. But you should with more temper——

Alcestes. I shan't abate an ace of it, the verses are execrable.

Philintes. You should shew your self tractable in your sentiments. Come, let's away.

Alcestes. I'll go, but nothing shall prevail upon me to retract.

Philintes. Come, we shall shew you.

Alcestes. Unless an express command comes from the king, for me to approve the verses, about which there's such a bustle, I'gad I shall ever maintain that they are wretched, and that a man deserves hanging for having made 'em. [To Clitander and Acastes who laugh.] S'heart, gentlemen, I did not think to be so diverting as I am.

Celimene. Go quickly, and make your appearance where you ought to do.

Alcestes. I am going thither, madam, and I shall return hither immediately to decide our debates.

ACT III. SCENE I.

CLITANDER, ACASTES.

CLITANDER.

DEAR Marquis, I see thou art absolutely at ease, every thing makes thee gay, and nothing discomposes thee. Dost thou think i' good faith, if thou hast not lost thy eye-sight, that thou hast any mighty reason to appear so joyful?

Acastes. I'gad, I don't see when I examine myself, where I can pick out any reason to be melancholy. I have a fortune, I'm young and spring from a family, which with some reason may stile itself noble; and I think, by the rank my extraction gives me, that there are very few employments which I don't stand fair for; as to courage, which we ought to value above every thing, the world knows without vanity, that I don't want it; and the world has seen me push an affair in life, after a vigorous and galant manner enough. For wit, doubtless I have it, with a good taste too, to judge and reason upon every thing without study; to make a learn'd figure in the play-house when any thing new comes out which I am fond of to idolatry, to decide there in chief, and set the whole house in an uprore at all the fine passages that deserve a clap. I'm adroit enough, I've a good air, a good mien, above all a handsome set of teeth, and a very fine shape. As to dressing well, I think, without flattering myself, he would be very unlucky who shou'd dispute it with me. I am in great esteem, as great as a man can be, belov'd by the fair sex, and well with my prince. I do think that with all this, my

dear Marquis, I do verily think a man might rest mighty well satisfy'd with himself in any country of the world.

Clitander. Yes, but finding conquests so easy elsewhere, why do you sigh here to no purpose?

Acastes. I? 'fore gad I'm not of the make, nor humour to endure the indifference of a fine lady. 'Tis enough for awkward people, for vulgar merit, to burn with constancy for your severe beauties; to languish at their feet, and be passive under their cruelty, to seek relief from sighs and tears, and endeavour by dancing a careful long attendance, to obtain what is denied to their merit. But people of my air, Marquis, are not made to love upon credit, and be at the whole expence. How extraordinary soever the merit of the fair may be, I'm of opinion, thank heav'n, that we have our value as well as they, and that 'tis not reason sufficient to be honour'd with a heart like mine, that it costs 'em nothing; and, at least to place every thing in its just balance, 'tis fitting advances ought to be made at a common expence.

Clitander. 'Tis therefore thy opinion, Marquis, that thou art very well here!

Acastes. I have some room, Marquis, to think so.

Clitander. Believe me, and ha' done with that extreme mistake; you flatter you self, my dear, and put out your own eyes.

Acastes. 'Tis true, I flatter myself, really I do put out my own eyes.

Clitander. But who makes you judge your self so perfectly happy?

Acastes. I flatter myself.

Clitander. What d'ye found your conjectures upon?

Acastes. I do put out my own eyes.

Clitander. Have you pretty sure proofs of it?

Acastes. I impose upon myself, I tell you.

Clitander. May Celimene have made any secret acknowledgement of her passion?

Acastes. No, I am cruelly us'd.

Clitander. Prithee, answer me.

Acastes. I meet with nothing but rebuffs.

Clitander. Ha' done with this raillery, and tell me what hopes she may have given you.

Acastes. I am the wretch, and thou the fortunate man; she has an utter aversion to my person, and I must hang myself some o' these days.

Clitander. Come on then, are you willing, Marquis, that, to adjust our love-affairs, we should both unanimously determine upon one thing? That he who can shew a certain mark of having the greater share in Celimene's heart, the other shall here give place to the pretended conqueror, and set him free from a continual rival?

Acastes. E'gad, this is a language exactly to my taste, and I do from the bottom of my heart agree to it. But hush.

SCENE II.

CELIMENE, ACASTES, CLITANDER.

CELIMENE.

HERE still?

Clitander. Love, madam, detains us.

Celimene. I just now heard a coach enter below, do you know who it is?

Clitander. No.

SCENE III.

CELIMENE, ACASTES, CLITANTER, BASQUE.

BASQUE.

ARSINOE, madam, is coming up to see you.

Celimene. What wou'd the woman have with me?

Basque. Eliante is there below to entertain her.

Celimene. What is in her head? And who sends for her?

Acastes. She passes in all places for a consummated prude; and the ardour of her zeal——

Celimene. Yes, yes, meer grimace. In her soul she's one of this world, and all her cares are bent to hook in somebody, without being able to compass it. She can't look but with an envious eye upon the profess'd humble servants, who are followers of any other lady; and her forlorn merit being abandon'd by every body, is perpetually a raving against the blindness of the age. She endeavours under the sham veil of prudery, to conceal that hideous solitude which one sees in her house; and to save the credit of her feeble charms, she wou'd fix a crime upon every thing out of their power. At the same time, a spark wou'd highly please the dame; and she has a sneaking kindness even for Alceste. The court he pays me is an insult upon her charms; she will have it a kind of robbery that I commit upon her: And her jealous spite, which she hides with great difficulty, gives underhand a sting against me in all places where she comes. In short, I never saw any thing, to my fancy, so stupid, she is to a supreme degree impertinent, and——

SCENE IV.

ARSINOE, CELIMENE, CLITANDER, ACASTES.

CELIMENE.

HAH! What propitious fortune has brought you hither, madam? Sincerely I was in pain about you.

Arsinoe. I come to give you some intelligence which I thought I ow'd you.

Celimene. Oh! my stars! how glad am I to see you!

[*Exeunt Clitander and Acastes laughing.*]

SCENE V.

ARSINOE, CELIMENE.

ARSINOE.

THEY could not have gone away more *a propos*.

Celimene. Shall we sit down?

Arsinoe. 'Tis not at all necessary. Friendship, madam, ought, above all, to display itself in those things, which may be of most importance to us: and as nothing can be of greater importance, than honour and decorum, I come to testify the friendship I have for you, by a piece of intelligence which touches your honour. Yesterday I was a visiting some people of singular virtue, where they turn'd the subject of the discourse upon you: and there your conduct, madam, with all its mighty shew, had the misfortune not to be commended. That croud o' people, whose visits you admit of, your galantry, and the rumours it excites, sound censurers more than it should have

done, and more rigorous than I could have wish'd. You may well think what side I took: I did every thing in my power to defend you; I strongly excus'd you, on the foot of your intention, and would be bound for the honesty of your mind. But you know there are certain things in life, which one cannot excuse, however desirous one may be to do it: And I was oblig'd to grant, that the air with which you live did you some injury: That it had but an ill face in the eyes of the world, that there are no stories so ill-natur'd, but are every where rais'd about it, and that, if you pleas'd, your whole deportment might give less handle to uncharitable judges. Not that I believe at the bottom your virtue touch'd; heav'n preserve me from entertaining such a thought! But folks easily give credit to the shadow of a crime, and 'tis not enough for us to live well, as to our selves. I believe you, madam, to be of too considerate a spirit, not to take in good part this profitable advice, and to attribute it to the secret motions of a zeal, which gives me a thorough attachment to all your interests.

Celimene. Madam, I have a great many thanks to return you. Such intelligence obliges me: and so far from taking it ill, I design this instant to acknowledge the favour, by a piece of intelligence which touches your honour too; and as I see you discover yourself my friend, by informing me of the reports that people spread about me; I shall in my turn, follow so kind an example, by acquainting you what 'tis people say of you. In a certain place, where I was a visiting t'other day, I met with some people of most extraordinary merit, who speaking of the true pains a person takes who lives virtuously, turn'd the conversation, madam, upon you. There your prudery and your violent zeal were not by any means

cited as a good model: that affectation of an exterior gravity, your everlasting discourses about wisdom and honour, your grimace and outries at the shadow of an indecency, which yet may have all the innocence of an expression only ambiguous: That high esteem you are in with yourself, and the eye of pity you cast upon every body else: your frequent lectures and keen censures on things that are innocent and pure: All this, madam, if I may speak frankly to you, was blam'd by common consent. To what purpose, said they, that modest look, that sage outside, that gives the lye to all the rest? She's exact at her prayers to the utmost punctilio, but she beats her servants, and pays 'em no wages. She makes a shew of huge zeal in all places of devotion, but she paints; and wants to appear handsome; she can't bear the sight of any thing naked in a picture, but has a mighty love for realities. For my part, I undertook your defence against 'em every one, and positively assur'd 'em 'twas all scandal; but the whole run of their opinions went against me, and their conclusion was, that you wou'd do well to be less solicitous about the actions of others, and take a little pains about your own: That one ought to look a great while into one's self, before we think of condemning other people; that one should add the weight of an exemplary life to the corrections we pretend to make in our neighbours; and that 'twou'd be still better to refer ourselves in this business, to those whom heav'n has committed the care of it to. I believe also, madam, you are of too considerate a spirit, not to take in good part this useful intelligence, and to attribute it to the secret motions of a zeal, which gives me a thorough attachment to all your interests.

Arlinee. Whatever we may be expos'd to in our re-

proofs, I did not expect, madam, such a reply as this; and I see plainly, by the sharpness there is in it, that my sincere advice has touch'd you to the quick.

Celimene. Quite the contrary, madam; and if people were but wise, these mutual cautions wou'd be brought more into fashion; they wou'd put an end by this frank treatment to each other, to that great blindness which all are under in respect to themselves. It will be entirely your fault if we do not continue this honest office with the same zeal, and do not take great care to compare notes as to what we hear of each other, you of me, I of you.

Arfinoe. Ah! madam, I can hear nothing of you, 'tis in me that a great deal is to be found fault with.

Celimene. Madam, one may, I believe, praise or blame every thing, and every body may have their reason according to their age or taste: There is a season for galantry, and there is one also proper for prudery: One may out of policy choose that, when the glory of our youthful years is faded: That serves to cover some vexatious misfortunes. I don't say but I may, one time or other, follow your steps; age brings about every thing; but 'tis not the time, madam, as every one knows, to be a prude at twenty.

Arfinoe. Really you plume yourself upon a very trifling advantage, and make a hideous noise with your age: Whatever mine may be more than your's, 'tis no such mighty matter to value yourself so much upon it; and I can't imagine, madam, why you shou'd put yourself into such a heat, and lash me in the strange manner you do.

Celimene. No more can I imagine, madam, why you are observ'd to inveigh so bitterly against me in all places; must you be eternally revenging your vexations upon me?

And how can I help it if folks won't make love to you? If my person captivates people, and they continue daily to make me those addresses, from which you may wish they wou'd desist, I don't know what to do in this case, and 'tis not my fault: You have a clear stage, and 'tis not I that prevent your having charms to attract them.

Arfinoc. Alas! And do you think I give myself any pain about the number of lovers, which you are so vain of? And is it not very easie to judge at what price one may engage 'em now-a-days? D'ye think to make one believe, as we see how things go, that your merit alone draws this croud together? That they only burn for you with an honourable passion, and that they all make court to you on the score of your virtue? People are not blinded by vain pretences, the world is no dupe, and I see people who are form'd with the power of inspiring tender sentiments, who nevertheless don't gather sparks to their houses: from thence we may draw consequences, that one does not win their hearts without great advances; that no body is our admirer only for the beauty of our eyes, and that we must pay for the court that's made to us. Therefore don't puff yourself up so much with glory for the trifling tinsel of a poor victory: correct a little the pride of your charms, and don't treat people with contempt on that account. Should our eyes envy yours their conquests, I fancy we might do as other people do, be under no restraint, and let you plainly see, that one has lovers, when one has a mind to have 'em.

Celimene. Have 'em then, madam, and let's see this affair; labour hard by this extraordinary secret to please: and without —

Arfinoc. Let us break off this kind of conversation, madam, it wou'd transport both your temper, and mine.

too far: and I should have already taken my leave, as I ought to do, had not my coach oblig'd me to wait longer.

Celimene. You are at liberty to stay, madam, as long as you please, and nothing should hurry you on that account: but, without fatiguing you with ceremony to me, I am going to give you better company; and this gentleman whom chance has brought hither *a propos*, will better supply my place in entertaining you.

SCENE VI.

ALCESTES, CELIMENE, ARSINOE.

CELIMENE.

ALCESTES, I must go write a line or two of a letter, which I can defer no longer without doing myself an injury: please to stay with the lady, she will easily be so good as to excuse my incivility.

SCENE VII.

ALCESTES, ARSINOE.

ARSINOE.

YOU see she desires I wou'd entertain you, whilst I wait a moment 'till my coach comes; and never could all her care offer me any thing more charming than such a conversation. Indeed persons of sublime merit attract the love and esteem of every body: and doubtless yours has hidden charms that influence my heart so as to enter into all your interests. I wish the court, by a propitious regard, wou'd do more justice to your worth: You

have reason to complain, and I am out of all patience when I daily see that they don't do any thing for you.

Alcestes. Me, madam? and what pretensions have I to any thing? what service have I done the state? What have I done, pray, so illustrious in itself, that I shou'd complain of the court, that they do nothing for me?

Arfinoe. All those on whom the court casts a propitious eye, have not always perform'd such famous services; there must be opportunity as well as power; and in short the merit you discover, ought—

Alcestes. Lack-a-day! No more of my merit, for goodness sake; what are you for having the court perplex itself about? It would have enough to do, and a plaguy deal o' care upon its hands, to have people's merit to bring to light.

Arfinoe. Illustrious merit brings itself to light; yours is extremely valu'd in many places, and you may take it from me, that in two considerable places you were yesterday extoll'd by people of great consequence.

Alcestes. Why, madam, all the world are made fools of now-a-days, and there's nothing but what the present age confounds by that means; every man has equally great merit bestow'd upon him, 'tis no longer an honour to be prais'd; one's sick o' panegyricks, and throws 'em back in people's faces; even my *valet de chambre* is put into the gazette.

Arfinoe. For my part, I cou'd heartily wish, the better to shew yourself, that an employment at court cou'd allure you: Wou'd you but discover the least inclination that way, one may set many engines at work to serve you, and I have persons at beck whom I'll employ for you, who can make your way easy to every thing.

Alcestes. And what would you have me do there,

madam? The humour I am of requires me to banish my self thence; heaven, when it sent me into the world, never made me a soul compatible with the air of a court. I don't find in myself the virtues necessary to succeed well, and make my fortune there. My chief talent is to be frank and sincere, I don't know how to cajol people in conversation; and he who has not the gift of concealing his thoughts, ought to make but a very short stay in that country. Out of a court, one has not that interest, doubtless, and those titles of honour, which it gives at present; but at the same time, in losing these advantages, one has not the vexation of acting very scurvy parts. One has not a thousand cruel rebuffs to suffer, one has not Mr. Such-a-one's verses to praise, nor my lady Such-a-one to flatter, nor to bear with the skull of a true marquis.

Arfinoe. Let us drop this discourse of a court, since you are so pleas'd; but I must pity you in your amour, and that you may have my thoughts on that subject, I could heartily wish your affections were better plac'd: you deserve, without doubt, a much happier fate, and she whom you are charm'd with is unworthy of you.

Alceste. But pray, madam, consider, when you say so, that this person is your friend.

Arfinoe. Yes; but it really goes against my conscience, to suffer any longer the wrong she does you; the situation I see you in, gives me too sensible an affliction, and I give you notice that you are abus'd in your love.

Alceste. 'Tis discovering a great tenderness for me, madam, and such intelligence is obliging to a lover.

Arfinoe. Yes, for all she is my friend, she is, and I say she is unworthy to enslave the heart of a man of ho-

nour : and that hers entertains no more than a dissembled kindness for you.

Alceste. That may be, madam, one cannot see thro' people's hearts; but your charity might well have forborn throwing such a suspicion into mine.

Arfinee. If you won't be undeceiv'd, I shall e'en say no more to you, that's easy enough.

Alceste. No, but on such a subject as this, whatever you expose us to, doubts are of all things the most tormenting: and for my part, I should be glad you would inform me of nothing but what you can plainly make appear to me.

Arfinee. Well, enough is said, and you are going to receive full light into this matter. Yes, I am willing your eyes should convince you of every thing, only give me your hand as far as my house. There I shall let you see a faithful proof of the infidelity of your fair one's heart: and if yours can be smitten with any other eyes, one may, perhaps, offer you something to give you consolation.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ELIANTE, PHILINTES.

PHILINTES.

NO, never was there a soul seen of so obstinate a make, nor an accommodation more difficult to be brought about; in vain did they endeavour to wind and turn him all ways, there was no drawing him from his opinion, and, in my thoughts, never did so whimsical a difference employ the prudence of these gentlemen. No, gentlemen, said he, I won't retract, and shall agree to

any thing, barring this point. What is he affronted at? And what wou'd he have me say? What, is it over with him as to honour, if he can't write well? What harm did my advice do him, which he took so heinously? One may be a worthy man and write bad verses; these affairs touch not at all upon the point of honour. I esteem him a galant man in all respects, a man of quality, of merit, and courage, every thing you please, but he's a very bad author. I'll praise, if you please, his train and his expence, his skill in horsemanship, in arms, in dancing: But for commending his verses, I am his humble servant; and when one has not the happiness to write well in that way, one should have no itch after rhyming, on pain of being cast for one's life. In short, all the favour and agreement that he cou'd, with the utmost efforts, bring himself to stoop to, was to say (thinking to soften his stile greatly) Sir, I am sorry I am so difficult to please; and out of respect to you, I cou'd have wish'd with all my soul, to have thought your late song better: and to conclude, they oblig'd 'em to close the whole proceeding in an embrace.

Eliante. He is very singular in his way of acting, but I have, I own it, a particular value for him: and the sincerity he piques himself upon, has something noble and heroic in it: 'Tis a virtue very rare in this present age, and I cou'd wish to see it in every body as it is in him.

Philintes. For my part, the more I see him, the more am I astonish'd at this passion he so abandons himself to: Being of the humour heav'n has form'd him with, I can't imagine how he takes it into his head to be in love; and less still can I imagine how your cousin should be the person his fancy inclines him to.

Eliante. This lets us sufficiently see, that love is not always the product of a resemblance of humours; and in this example all those accounts of tender sympathies are falsify'd.

Philintes. But d'ye think, by what appears, that she loves him?

Eliante. That's a point not very easy to be known, how can one judge whether she loves him in reality? That heart of hers is not, even itself, very sure what it thinks; it loves sometimes without knowing very well why, and fancies too at other times, that it loves when there is nothing in't.

Philintes. I believe our friend will find more vexation with this cousin o' yours than he imagines; and to say the truth, had he my heart, he wou'd turn his addresses quite to another quarter; and we shou'd see him, madam, by a choice much more just, make his use of the kindness you discover for him.

Eliante. For my part, I use no disguise in the matter, and I think one shou'd be sincere in these points: I don't oppose his passion at all, on the contrary I interest my self in it: and if the thing stuck only at me, I myself, the world shou'd see, wou'd join him to her he loves: but if in such a choice, as it possibly may happen, his passion should try its fate another way, and it must be so that he shou'd make somebody else happy, I cou'd resolve upon receiving his addresses; and his being refus'd in such an affair, wou'd not create in me any aversion to him.

Philintes. And I, madam, on my part, do not at all oppose that kindness your beauty entertains for him: and he himself, if he please, can fully acquaint you with what I have taken care to tell him upon this subject. But if by their being united in marriage, you shou'd be out

of a capacity of receiving his addresses, all mine shou'd attempt that glorious favour, which with so much goodness you present him with: Nappy, madam, if when your heart can withdraw itself from him, it might but fall to my share.

Eliante. You are pleas'd to be merry, Philintes.

Philintes. No, madam, I speak now from the bottom of my soul; I wait the occasion of making you an offer without reserve, and with all my wishes impatiently wait for that moment.

SCENE II.

ALCESTES, ELIANTE, PHILINTES.

ALCESTES.

AH! Madam, do me justice, for an offence which has just now triumph'd over all my constancy.

Eliante. What's the matter? What has disturb'd you?

Alcestes. Something ails me, which 'tis death to think of; and the dissolution of all nature had not oppress'd me like this adventure. 'Tis over with me—my love—I can't speak.

Eliante. Endeavour to recover your spirits a little.

Alcestes. O just heav'n! must the odious vices of the basest minds be join'd to so many charms?

Eliante. But pray who can—

Alcestes. Ah! all is ruin'd, I am, I am betray'd, I am murder'd: Celimene—cou'd one have believ'd this news? Celimene deceives me, and is no better than a faithless wretch.

Eliante. Have you just grounds to believe it?

Philintes.

Philintes. Perhaps 'tis a suspicion lightly conceiv'd;
your jealous temper sometimes takes chimeras—

Alcestes. Oh! 'Sdeath, Sir, meddle you with your
own affairs. [To Eliante:] 'Tis being but too certain of
her treachery, to have a letter in my pocket under her
own hand. Yes, madam, a letter writ, to Orontes, has
set before my eyes my disgrace, and her shame. Orontes,
whose addresses I thought she avoided, and whom I dread-
ed the least of all my rivals.

Philintes. A letter may deceive us by appearance:
and is not so culpable sometimes, as one thinks it.

Alcestes. Once more, Sir, pray leave me, and trouble
yourself only about your own concerns.

Eliante. You shou'd moderate your passion, and the
injury—

Alcestes. This work, madam, belongs to you; 'tis
to you that my heart has now recourse for power to free
itself from this galling affliction. Revenge me of your
ungrateful and perfidious relation, who basely betrays so
constant a passion; revenge me for this stroke which
ought to raise your horror.

Eliante. I revenge you! How?

Alcestes. In receiving my heart. Accept it, madam,
in room of the faithless creature, 'tis that way I can take
vengeance on her: and I will punish her by the sincere
addresses, by the profound love, the respectful concern,
the earnest devoirs, and the assiduous service, which this
heart shall offer you as an ardent sacrifice.

Eliante. I sympathize with you, doubtless, in what
you suffer, and don't despise the heart you offer me; but
perhaps the harm is not so great as you think it, and you
may lay aside this desire of vengeance; when the injury
proceeds from an object full of charms, one forms many

designs one never executes: In vain do we see powerful reason to part, the beloved criminal is presently innocent; all the harm we with easily vanishes, and 'tis very well known what the anger of a lover is.

Alcestes. No, no, madam, no: The crime is mortal, there's no return, and I absolutely break with her; nothing shall change the resolution I have fixt of doing it, and I shou'd be my own tormentor, ever to love her more. Here she is; my passion doubles at her approach. I'll go reproach her in the most lively manner for her black ingratitude, absolutely confound her, and after that bring you back a heart, intirely disengag'd from her delusive charms.

SCENE III.

CECIMENE, ALCESTES.

ALCESTES *aside*.

OH heaven! can I be now master of my transports?

Celimene [*aside*.] Hey, hey! [to Alcestes.] What confusion is this you are in? What means that sighing, and those gloomy looks you cast upon me?

Alcestes. That all the horrors a soul is capable of, have nothing in them comparable to your perfidies; that fate, devils, and incens'd heav'n never produc'd any thing so wicked as yourself.

Celimene. This is certainly an admirable way of courtship,

Alcestes. Nay, none of your jests, 'tis no time to laugh; much rather blush, you have reason for it: I have sure proofs of your treachery. This is what the perplexities of my heart had pointed out; 'twas not in vain

that my affection was alarm'd: By those frequent suspicions, which you abhor'd, I search'd after the misfortune my eyes have hit upon; and in spite of all your caution and address in dissimulation, my genius hinted to me what I had to fear; but don't presume that I shall endure the vexation of seeing myself outrageously abus'd, without being reveng'd. I know that one has no power over one's inclinations, that love will always spring up independent; that one can never take possession of a heart by force, and that every mind is free to name its conqueror. Accordingly I shou'd have had no reason of complaint, had you explain'd to me without dissimulation; and tho' you had rejected my addresses at the first sight, my heart had had no right of taxing any thing but fortune. But to have my passion applauded by a deceitful confession, 'tis a treachery, 'tis a perfidy, which can't meet with too great a punishment; and I shall give full swing to my resentments. Yes, yes, after such an outrage dread every thing that can happen: I am no more my self, I am all rage: Pierc'd by the mortal wound which you have given me, my senses are no longer under the government of reason; I yield to the motions of a just fury, and shall not answer for what I may do.

Celimene. Whence then, I pray, proceeds such raving? Tell me, have you lost your senses?

Alcestes. Yes, yes, I lost 'em, when on sight of you I imbib'd, to my misfortune, the poison which kills me, and when I thought of finding any sincerity in the treacherous charms with which I was enchanted.

Celimene. What treachery then can you complain of?

Alcestes. Oh! the double heart, how well it knows the art of dissimulation! But I have the means ready at hand to drive it to its last shifts; cast your eyes here,

and know the strokes of your own pen; the discovery of this letter is sufficient to confound you, and against this evidence you can have nothing to answer.

Celimene. And this is the thing that ruffles your spirits?

Alcestes. Don't you blush at sight of this writing?

Celimene. And for what reason shou'd I blush at it?

Alcestes. How! Do you add assurance to artifice? Will you disown it, because it is not sign'd?

Celimene. Why disown a letter of my own handwriting?

Alcestes. And can you look upon it without being in confusion at the crime, of which the whole tenor of it accuses you?

Celimene. You are in truth, a most extravagant mortal.

Alcestes. What? Do you thus outbrave this convincing proof? And has that which lets me see your tenderness for Orontes, nothing in it injurious to me, and shameful to you?

Celimene. Orontes! Who told you that the letter is for him?

Alcestes. The persons who this day put it into my hands. But I'm willing to grant that it should be for another; has my heart the less reason to complain of yours? Will you in reality, be less culpable towards me, on that account?

Celimene. But if 'tis a woman this letter is writ to, wherein does it hurt you? and what is there culpable in it?

Alcestes. Ha! the turn is good, and the excuse admirable; I was not thinking of this stroke I own it: And here I am absolutely convicted. Dare you have recourse to these gross impositions? and d'ye think people

have lost their eyes? Let's see, let's see a little in what way, with what air, you will support a falsity so palpable; and how you can misapply all the words of a letter which shews so much passion, to a woman? To cover your want of constancy, adjust what I'm going to read —

Celimene. I've no mind to't. You are very merry to take such command upon you, and to tell me flatly to my face, what you dare to tell me.

Alcestes. No, without being in a passion, take a little pains to justify the terms here.

Celimene. No. I won't do it; and in this accident, whatever you think, is of little importance to me.

Alcestes. Pray, shew me, I shall be satisfied, if you can but explain this letter for a woman.

Celimene. No, 'tis for Orontes, and I wou'd have you think so, I receive all his addresses with the greatest joy; I admire his discourse, I esteem his person, and I agree to whatever you please. Do, quarrel, let nothing stop you, and don't torment me any more.

Alcestes aside.] Heav'ns! Can any thing be invented more cruel? And was ever heart treated in this manner? What! Here I am justly in a passion with her, 'tis I come to make my complaints, and I must bear the blame! She aggravates to the last degree my sorrow, and my suspicions; she suffers me to believe every thing, and glories in every thing; and at the same time, my heart is still cowardly enough, not to break the chain that binds it, not to arm itself with a generous disdain against the ungrateful object it is but too much smitten with! [to Celimene.] Ah! perfidious creature! how well you know to make your advantage of my extreme weakness even against myself; and manage to your own ends that prodigious excess of this fatal love which took rise from those

traiterous eyes! Clear yourself at least, from the crime which bears too hard upon me, and no longer affect being guilty of it: If it can be done, make me this letter innocent, my fondness consents to lend you a helping hand, strive to appear true in this case, and I will strive to believe you such.

Celimene. Go, you are a fool with your jealous transports, and don't deserve the love one has for you. I wou'd know, who could oblige me to descend to the baseness of dissembling with you? And why, if my heart inclin'd another way, I shou'd not with sincerity tell you so? What does not the obliging assurance of my sentiments defend me sufficiently against all your suspicions? Are they of any weight against such security? Is it not affronting me to hearken to 'em? And since our heart makes the utmost effort, when it can resolve to confess it loves; since the honour of the sex, that enemy to love, so strongly opposes such like confessions; should the lover, who sees us get over such an obstacle for his sake, with impunity suspect that oracle? And is it not a crime not to rest secure of that which one cannot declare but after great struggles with one's self? Go, such suspicions deserve my indignation, and you are not worth one's giving one's self any concern about: I am a fool, and am heartily vex'd at my simplicity, for still retaining any kindness for you, I ought to fix my esteem somewhere else, and give you just reason to complain of me.

Alceste. Ah, traitress! How strange is my weakness for you! You certainly deceive me with these tender expressions; but it signifies nothing, I must follow my destiny, my soul's intirely resign'd to your fidelity, I must see to the last what your heart will prove; and whether it can form so black a design as to deceive me.

Celimene. No, you don't love me as you ought to love.

Alceste. Oh ! nothing is comparable to the extremity of my passion ; and in the zeal I have to shew this to all the world, I go so far as to form wishes against you : Yes, I cou'd wish that no person thought you amiable, that you were reduc'd to a miserable condition, that heav'n at your infancy had bestow'd nothing upon you, that you had had neither rank, birth, nor fortune, so that I might, by a more distinguishing sacrifice of my heart, have made you reparation for the injustice of such a fate, and that I might at this time have had the joy and the glory of seeing you receive your all at the hands of my love.

Celimene. This is wishing one well after a strange manner ! Preserve me, heav'n ! from your ever having occasion — Here comes Master Du Bois, ridiculously equip'd.

SCENE IV.

CELIMENE, ALCESTES, DU BOIS.

ALCESTES.

WHAT means this equipage, and this frightful air ? What's the matter with you ?

Du Bois. Sir ———

Alceste. Well.

Du Bois. Strange things in abundance.

Alceste. What is it.

Du Bois. We are scurvily situated, Sir, in our affairs.

Alceste. How ?

Du Bois. Shall I speak aloud?

Alcestes. Yes, speak quickly.

Du Bois. Is n't there somebody here?

Alcestes. Pooh, what trifling is here! Will you speak?

Du Bois. Sir, you must step aside.

Alcestes. How?

Du Bois. We must decamp without beat o'drum.

Alcestes. And why?

Du Bois. I tell you we must quit this place.

Alcestes. The cause?

Du Bois. We must depart, Sir, without taking leave.

Alcestes. But for what reason all this stuff?

Du Bois. By reason, Sir, that we must pack and away.

Alcestes. Plague! I shall infallibly crack your skull, rascal, if you don't explain yourself in another manner.

Du Bois. Sir, a fellow with a black dress and phiz, came quite into the kitchen, to leave with us a paper, scribbled after such a manner, that a man had need be more cunning than the devil to read it. I make no manner o'doubt, but 'tis about your law-suit; but Belzebub himself, I believe, cou'd not find it out.

Alcestes. Well! How! What does this paper discover, traitor, with respect to our departure you spoke of just now?

Du Bois. 'Tis to tell you, Sir, as how an hour afterwards, a man who comes often to visit you, came very earnestly to see for you, and not finding you charg'd me softly, knowing that I am a very faithful servant, to tell you——stay, what d'ye call his name?

Alcestes. Ha' done with his name, rascal, and tell me what he said to thee?

Du Bois. In short, 'tis one of your friends, and that's sufficient. He told me that 'tis at your peril not to go

hence, and that fortune threatens you here with being arrested.

Alcestes. But how? Wou'd he not specify any thing t'ye?

Du Bois. No, he ask'd me for a pen, ink and paper; and writ a word or two, by which, I believe, you may come at the knowledge of the bottom of this mystery.

Alcestes. Give it me then.

Celimene. What can there be in this?

Alcestes. I don't know, but I long to be fully let into it. Wilt thou ha' done quickly, thou impertinent villain?

Du Bois after having fumbled for it a long while.]
Troth, Sir, I left it upon your table.

Alcestes. I don't know what hinders me ———

Celimene. Don't put yourself in a passion, but go and unravel this perplexing business.

Alcestes. It seems to me that fortune, take what care I can, has sworn to debar me of your conversation; but to triumph over it, indulge my passion, madam, with one sight of you more, before the day is ended.

ACT V. SCENE I.

ALCESTES, PHILINTES.

ALCESTES.

MY resolution is fix'd, I tell you.

Philintes. But, whatever this stroke may be, must it needs oblige you——

Alcestes. No, you labour in vain, in vain do you reason with me, nothing can divert me from what I say:

Too much perverseness reigns in the age we live in, and I'm resolv'd to withdraw myself from all human commerce. What! the world sees that honour, probity, modesty and the laws are all at once against my adversary! People are every where crying up the justice of my cause! My mind reposes itself upon the assurance of my right! At the same time I am deceiv'd in the success; I have justice on my side, yet I lose my cause! A scoundrel, whose scandalous history is so well known, comes off triumphant by a most hellish falsehood! All honesty yields to his perfidy! He finds a way of justifying himself, in cutting my throat! The importance of his grimace, wherein is glaring artifice, overthrows all right and perverts justice! He gets a decree of court to crown his villainy; and still not content with the injury they do me, there is got abroad in the world an abominable book, of which even the reading is criminal, a book that deserves the utmost severity, of which the knave has the impudence to make me the author! And upon this Oronates is observ'd to mutter, and villainously endeavours to support the imposture! He who maintains the rank of an honest man at court, to whom I have been nothing but sincere and frank; who comes to me in spite of me, with an eager forwardness, to demand my opinion of some verses he has made, and because I treat him with honour, and wou'd neither betray him, nor the truth, he is aiding to oppress me with an imaginary crime! Now is he become my greatest adversary! And I am never heartily to be pardon'd, because I did not think his song was a good one! 'Sdeath 'tis after this manner mankind are made! These are the actions to which a sense of glory carries 'em! This is the fidelity, the virtuous zeal, the justice and the honour one finds among 'em. Let's away,

'tis too much to bear the plagues they are devising, let us escape from these savage woods, this cut-throat place; and since among men you live like real wolves, traitors, you shall never have me with you again as long as I live.

Philintes. I apprehend the design you are in to be a good deal too hasty, and the whole mischief is not so great as you make it: What your antagonist has the assurance to impute to you, has not had the credit to occasion your being arrested; his false report we see destroys itself, and 'tis an action which may possibly turn severely upon himself.

Alcestes. Him! He fears not any clamour from such tricks as these, he has a licence to be an avow'd villain; and so far will such an adventure as this be from hurting his credit, you'll see him to-morrow in a more flourishing condition.

Philintes. In short, 'tis certain people have not given in too much to the report his malice has spread against you; from this quarter hitherto you have nothing to fear; and as for your law-suit which you may complain about, 'tis easy for you to bring the trial on afresh, and against this sentence——

Alcestes. No, I'll abide by it. However sensible an injury such a sentence may do me, I'll take great care they shall not reverse it; one sees too plainly by this how right is abus'd; and I wou'd have it remain to posterity, as a notorious mark, a famous testimony of the wickedness of the men of this age. It may indeed cost me about twenty thousand livres, but for twenty thousand livres I shall have a right to rave against the iniquity of human nature, and to nourish an immortal hatred for it.

Philintes. But in short——

Alcestes. But in short your pains are superfluous: What

can you say to me, Sir, upon this head? Can you possibly have the assurance to excuse to my face the horribleness of all that's transacting?

Philintes. No, I do agree to what you please. Every thing goes by cabal, and by pure interest; and 'tis now-a-days scarce any thing else but craft that carries it, and men should be otherways dispos'd. But is their want of justice a reason why we should think of withdrawing from their society? All these human defects give us opportunities in life, of exercising our philosophy. 'Tis the most amiable employment virtue finds; and if every place were full of honesty, and all hearts were frank, just, and docile, the greatest part of our virtues would be useless to us, since the use of 'em is plac'd in this, in the power of bearing the injustice of another, in respect to our property, without being ruffled. And after the same way that a heart of profound virtue —

Alcestes. I know, Sir, that you talk the best in the world. You always abound in fine reasoning, but you lose your time and all your fine discourses. Reason persuades me for my good, to retire, I have not command enough of my tongue, I cou'd not answer for what I might say, and I should run myself into a thousand broils. Let me, without any more words, wait upon Celimene, 'tis proper I have her consent to my design; I shall now see whether she really loves me, and this is the critical moment to convince me of it.

Philintes. Let us go up to Eliante, and wait her coming.

Alcestes. No, my mind is agitated with too much care; go you and see her, and leave me, in short, in this little dusky corner with my gloomy melancholy.

Philintes. That's odd fort o' company to wait for, I'll go prevail upon Eliante to come down.

SCENE II.

CELIMENE, ORONTES, ALCESTES.

ORONTES.

YES, madam, you are to consider, whether by so dear an engagement, you will fix me for ever yours: I must have an absolute certainty of your affections; a lover does not like wavering in such a point as this: If the warmth of my passion has really mov'd you, you should not by any means scruple letting me see it; and after all, the proof I demand of you, is no more than not to admit of Alcestes's addresses, to sacrifice him, madam, to my love, and in short, from this time forward to banish him your house.

Celimene. But what mighty matter provokes you against him, you whom I have heard speak so much of his merit?

Orontes. There's no need, madam, of these explanations. The matter in hand is to know your sentiments: pray, choose to keep one or t'other, my resolution only waits upon yours.

Alcestes stepping out of the corner whither he had retir'd.] Yes, the gentleman is right: you must choose, madam, and his demand here agrees with my desire; the same impatience urges me, and the same care calls me, my love must have an infallible mark of yours. Matters can be protracted no longer, this is the moment you are to explain yourself.

Orontes. I wou'd not by any means, Sir, disturb your good fortune by an importunate passion.

Alcestes. Jealous, or not jealous, Sir, I'll have no share of her heart with you.

Orontes. If she thinks your love preferable to mine—

Alcestes. If she is capable of the least inclination for you—

Orontes. I swear henceforward to make no pretensions to her.

Alcestes. I peremptorily swear never to set eyes on her more.

Orontes. Madam, you may speak without constraint.

Alcestes. Madam, you may explain yourself without fear.

Orontes. You have nothing to do, but tell us where your inclinations are fix'd.

Alcestes. You have nothing but to cut the matter short, and choose which of us you will.

Orontes. What? do you seem to have any difficulty in such a choice?

Alcestes. What? do you hesitate, and appear uncertain?

Celimene. Good heav'ns! how unseasonable is this importunity! and how you shew yourselves both in the wrong! I can easily determine as to the preference, and 'tis not my heart here that wavers: 'tis not in suspense betwixt you, nor is any thing sooner done than to choose what we wish. But to say the truth, I am not a little upon the rack to make a declaration of this kind before you. I think these disobliging speeches shou'd never be spoke in the presence of people: That a heart gives light sufficient, in its inclinations, without our being oblig'd to proceed abruptly to a quarrel; and that 'tis sufficient, in short, that proofs of a milder nature inform a lover of the ill success of his courtship.

Orontes. No, no, I have nothing to fear from a frank confession, I consent to it on my side.

Alcestes. And I demand it; 'tis that I have heré the boldness, above all, to insist on, and I don't want to see any of your management. Your great study is to keep in with all the world, but no more amusement, no more uncertainty; you must explain yourself clearly upon this affair, otherways I shall take your refusal for a decision: I shall know, for my part, how to interpret this silence, and shall reckon upon the worst I can think, to be really said.

Orontes. I am oblig'd to you, Sir, for this warmth, and I here say the same thing to her that you do.

Celimene. How you teize me here with this obstinacy! Is there any reason in what you demand? And have I not told you what motive restrains me? I'll be judg'd by Eliante who comes here.

SCENE III.

ELIANTE, PHILINTES, CELIMENE,
ORONTES, ALCESTES.

CELIMENE.

HERE am I persecuted, cousin, by people whose humour seems to me to be concerted. They both of 'em, with the same heat, will needs have me declare which of 'em my heart makes choice of; and that by a sentence which I must pronounce to his face, I should forbid one of the two all the application he can make. Tell me whether this is ever done?

Eliante. Don't consult me upon the subject: you

may perhaps address yourself to a very wrong person. I am for the people who speak their thoughts.

Orontes. 'Tis in vain, madam, for you to excuse yourself.

Alcestes. All your evasions will be but ill-seconded.

Orontes. You must, you must speak, and have done wavering.

Alcestes. You need do no more than continue silent.

Orontes. I desire but one word to end our debates.

Alcestes. And I, for my share, understand you, if you don't speak at all.

SCENE IV.

ARSINOE, CELIMENE, ELIANTE,
ALCESTES, PHILINTES, ACASTES,
CLITANDER, ORONTES.

ACASTES.

MADAM, we two come, no offence, to clear up a certain trifling affair.

[Clitander to Orontes and Alcestes.] You are here very *a propos*, gentlemen, and you are also concerned in this affair.

[Arsinoe to Celimene.] Madam, you will be surpris'd at sight of me, but these gentlemen are the occasion of my coming. They came to me, and complain'd of a trick which it can't enter into my heart to give credit to. I have too high an esteem for the native honesty of your mind, ever to believe you capable of such a crime; my eyes contradicted their strongest proofs, and my friendship passing by some trifling words we had, I was

willing to bear 'em company to your house, to see you clear yourself of this calumny.

Acastes. Yes, madam, let us see, with calmness of spirit, how you will go about to support this; was this letter writ by you to Clitander?

Clitander. Did you write this tender epistle to Acastes?

Acastes to Orontes and Alcestes.] Gentlemen, these lines have nothing in them obscure to you; I doubt not but her civility has made you too well acquainted with her hand: But this is well enough worth the trouble of reading.

"YOU are a strange man, Clitander, to condemn my gaiety, and to reproach me, that I am never so merry, as when I am not with you. There is nothing so unjust; and if you don't come very soon, to ask my pardon for this offence, I'll never pardon it as long as I live. Our clumsy Flemish viscount."

He should have been here. "Our clumsy Flemish viscount, with whom you begin your complaints, is a man who can never hit my taste; and since the time I saw him spitting in a pool for full three quarters of an hour to make circles, I never could have a good opinion of him. As to the little marquis—"

That's myself, gentlemen, without vanity. "As to the little marquis who held me so long by the hand yesterday, I think there is nothing so diminutive as his whole person; and 'tis one of your gentry of merit, who have nothing but their sword to trust to. As to the man with green ribbons—"

Your turn now, Sir. [To Alcestes.] "As to the man with green ribbons, he diverts me sometimes with his blunt ways, and his fantastical peevishness. But there are a thousand occasions when I think

" him the most troublesome creature in the world. And
 " for the sonnet-monger——

Now for your packet. [To Orontes.

" And for the sonnet-monger who pushes himself forward
 " for a wit, and will be an author in spite of the world,
 " I cannot take the pains to hearken to what he says;
 " and his prose fatigues me as much as his verse. Per-
 " suade yourself, therefore, that I am not always diverted
 " so well as you imagine; that I find more matter of
 " complaint than I could wish in all the parties I am drawn
 " into; and that the presence of those we love, gives a
 " marvellous relish to the pleasures we enjoy."

CLITANDER. Now for myself.

" Your Clitander, whom you talk to me of, and who
 " is so much of the affected beau, is the last man I should
 " have a kindness for. He is extravagant in persuading
 " himself one loves him; and you are so in believing one
 " does not love you. To be reasonable therefore, change
 " sentiments with him; and see me as often as you can,
 " to help me bear the trouble of being besieged by him."

We have here the model of a very fine character,
 madam, and you know what to call it. 'Tis enough;
 we shall both of us go shew this glorious portrait of your
 heart in all places.

Acastes. I could say a good deal to you, and a fine
 subject it is; but I don't hold you worthy my anger;
 and I cou'd let you see, that your little marquises, for
 their consolation, have hearts of a much higher price."

SCENE V.

CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ARSINOË, ALCESTES,
ORONTES, PHILINTES.

ORONTES.

WHAT! am I thus pulled to pieces after all the things you have writ me? And does your heart adorn'd with the fair appearances of love, engage itself by turns to all mankind? Go, I was too much a dupe, and shall be so no longer, you do me a favour in letting me know you; I am the richer by a heart which you thus restore to me, and have my revenge in what you lose. [To Alcestes.] Sir, I don't know any obstacle there is now to your passion, and you may conclude matters with the lady.

SCENE VI.

CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ARSINOË, ALCESTES,
PHILINTES.

ARSINOË to Celimene.

THIS is certainly one of the basest actions in the world, I can be no longer silent, I'm shock'd at it. Were there ever any proceedings like yours, madam? I don't enter into the concerns of the rest: [pointing to Alcestes.] But this gentleman, who had fix'd your happiness, a man of merit and honour as he is, and who doats on you to idolatry, should he —

Alcestes. Pray, madam, leave me to manage my own interests in this affair myself, and don't charge yourself with these superfluous cares. In vain does my heart ob-

serve you espouse its quarrel, 'tis not in a condition to requite you for this great zeal; and you are not the person I cou'd think of, shou'd I strive to revenge myself by another choice.

Arfinoe. Umph! Do you fancy, Sir, I have any such thought, and that I should be in such a violent hurry to have you? You have a great deal of vanity, I think, in your temper, if you can flatter yourself with such a belief: That lady's refuse is a sort of ware one would be much to blame to be taken with. Pray be undeceived, and carry it less haughtily, people of my condition are not for such as you. You will do well to sigh for her still, and I long to see such a fine match.

SCENE VII.

CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ALCESTES, PHILINTES.

ALCESTES to Celimene.

WELL, in spite of all I see, I have hitherto been silent, and have let all the world speak before me. Have I commanded myself long enough? and may I now——

Celimene. Yes, you may say every thing: You are in the right when you complain, and reproach me after any manner you please. I'm to blame, I confess it, and my confused mind does not seek to put you off with any frivolous excuse: I despised the fury of the rest here, but I own my crime in respect to you; certainly your resentment is just, I know how criminal I must appear to you, that every thing speaks my unfaithfulness to you, and that in short you have reason to hate me. Do so, I consent to it.

Alcestes. But can I do it, traitress, can I thus get the

better of all my fondness? And though I should most ardently wish to hate you, shall I find a heart ready to obey me? [To Eliante and Philintes.] You see what an unworthy fondness can do, and I make you both witnesses of my weakness. But to confess the truth to you, this is not all yet, you will see me push this matter even to extremity, shew you that we are wrongfully still'd wife, and that in all hearts there is still something of the man. [To Celimene.] Yes, perfidious creature, I am willing to forget your crimes, and can find in my heart to excuse all your tricks, and cover 'em with the name of a weakness, into which the viciousness of the times has betrayed your youth; provided your heart will second a design I have formed of avoiding all human creatures, and that you are determined to follow me without delay, into my desert, where I have made a vow to live. This is the only way you can in every one's opinion, repair the mischief of your letters, and by which, after this discovery, which a noble mind must abhor, I may be allowed still to love you.

Celimene. I renounce the world before I grow old, and go bury myself in your desert!

Alceste. And if your flame is answerable to mine, what should all the rest of the world signify to you? Are not your desires satisfied with me?

Celimene. Solitude is frightful to a person of twenty. I don't perceive my soul great, or firm enough to resolve upon undertaking a design of that nature. If giving you my hand can satisfy your wishes, I may resolve to tie the knot, and Hymen —

Alceste. No, now my heart detests you, and this refusal alone does more than all the rest. Since you are not so far link'd in the charming bondage, to find your

all in me, as I do in you, go, I discard you, and this sensible affront for ever disengages me from your base tyranny.

SCENE THE LAST.

ELIANTE, ALCESTES, PHILINTES.

ALCESTES speaks to ELIANTE.

A THOUSAND virtues, madam, adorn your beauty, and I never saw any thing in you but what was sincere; I have had for this long time an extreme value for you; but allow me ever to esteem you in the same way: And excuse my heart in the variety of its troubles, if it waves the honour of wearing your chains; I am sensible that I am unworthy of them, and begin to find heav'n has not form'd me for this union; that the refuse of a heart, which could be of no worth to you, wou'd be too mean an homage for you, and that in short —

Eliante. You may pursue your thought, my hand is under no embarasment where to bestow itself: And here is your friend, who without giving myself too much uneasiness, might possibly accept it, shou'd I desire it of him.

Philintes. Ah, madam! that honour is my whole ambition, and I cou'd sacrifice my blood and life for it.

Alcestes. That you may taste true contentment, may you ever retain these sentiments each for the other. Betrayed on all sides, oppress'd with injustice, I am going to escape a gulph where vice reigns triumphant; and to search out some retir'd corner of the world, where one may have the liberty to be a man of honour.

Philintes. Come, come, my charmer, let's exhaust our art,
To break this savage purpose of his heart.

THE END.

7 MA 55

A C T O F
THE

MOCK-DOCTOR,

A

C O M E D Y.

SCENE THE LAST

A C T O R S.

GERONTE, father to Lucinda.
LUCINDA, daughter to Geronte.
LEANDER, Lucinda's lover.
SGANAREL, husband to Martina, a domestic of Geronte.
MARTINA, wife of Sganarel.
Mr. ROBERT, neighbour to Sganarel.
VALERE, domestic of Geronte.
LUCAS, husband to Jacqueline.
JACQUELINE, nurse at Geronte's, and wife to Lucas.
THIBAUT, father to Perrin, } Peasants.
PERRIN, son of Thibaut. }

SCENE, the country.



THE
MOCK-DOCTOR.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SGANAREL, MARTINA.

SGANAREL.

NO, I tell thee that I will not do't, and that it belongs to me to talk, and to be master.

Martina. And I tell thee, that I'll have thee to live as I please, and that I'm not married to thee to endure thy frolics.

Sganarel. O the monstrous plague of having a wife! How right was Aristotle, when he declared that a wife is worse than a devil!

Martina. Observe a little the notable man, with his blockhead of an Aristotle.

Sganarel. Yes, notable man. Find me a faggot binder, who understands, like me, to reason upon things, who has served for six years a famous physician; and who in his younger days had his accidence by heart.

Martina. Plague on thee for an eternal ass.

Sganarel. Plague on thee for an impudent baggage.

Martina. Curst be that day and hour wherein I took it into my head to say Yes!

VOL. II.

M

Sganarel. Curst be the hornify'd notary who made me sign to my ruin!

Martina. It well becomes you, truly, to complain of that affair. Ought'st thou to be one single moment without thanking heav'n that thou hast me for thy wife? Or didst thou merit such a person as I am?

Sganarel. 'Tis true, that you did me too much honour, and I had room to be satisfy'd the first night of our nuptials. Hey—'sdeath, don't make me speak upon that head; I should say certain things——

Martina. What? what would you say?

Sganarel. Enough; let us leave this chapter, it sufficeth that we know what we know, and that you were very lucky in lighting on me.

Martina. Lucky, d'ye call me in lighting on thee? A fellow who has brought me to an hospital, a sot, a rascal who eats up all that I have.

Sganarel. You lye, I drink part of it.

Martina. Who sells, piece by piece, every thing that's in the house.

Sganarel. That's living upon one's means.

Martina. Who has taken my very bed from under me?

Sganarel. You'll rise the earlier.

Martina. Who, in short, has not left a single moveable in all the house.

Sganarel. We may move the easier.

Martina. And who from morning to night, does nothing but play and drink.

Sganarel. That's to keep myself from the vapours.

Martina. And what would you have me do the while, with my family?

Sganarel. Whatever you please.

Martina. I have four poor little infants in my arms.

Sganarel. Lay 'em on the ground.

Martina. Who are crying to me, every moment for bread.

Sganarel. Give them the rod. When I have drank well, and ate well, I'll have ev'ry one satisfy'd in my house.

Martina. And do you mean, sot, that things shall always go so?

Sganarel. Wife, let us proceed softly, if you please.

Martina. That I shall perpetually endure your insolences and debaucheries.

Sganarel. Don't let us put ourselves in a passion, wife.

Martina. And that I shall never be able to find a way of bringing you to your duty.

Sganarel. You know, wife, that I have not a very passive spirit of my own, and that I have an arm sufficiently strong.

Martina. I laugh at your threats. .

Sganarel. My pretty little wife, my hony, your hide itches according to custom.

Martina. I'll let you see, that I'm no ways afraid of you.

Sganarel. My dear rib, you have a desire to force something from me.

Martina. D'ye think that I fear your words?

Sganarel. Sweet object of my vows, I shall cuff your ears.

Martina. Sot, as thou art!

Sganarel. I shall bang you.

Martina. Wine-sack!

Sganarel. I shall belabour you.

Martina. Scoundrel!

Sganarel. I shall curry you.

Martina. Rascal, impudence, knave, coward, villain, hang-dog, mumper, rogue, pickpocket, varlet, thief——

Sganarel. Um——you will have it then?

[Sganarel taking a cudgel and beating her.

Martina crying.] Oh! oh! oh! oh!

Sganarel. This is the true method to make you quiet.

SCENE II.

Mr. ROBERT, SGANAREL, MARTINA.

Mr. ROBERT.

HOITY, hoity, hoity; fy, what's here to do? What a base trick is this! Plague on the scoundrel for beating his wife thus.

Martina to Mr. Robert.] I have a mind that he should beat me.

Mr. Robert. Nay then I agree to it with all my heart.

Martina. What do you meddle for?

Mr. Robert. I was in the wrong.

Martina. Is it your business?

Mr. Robert. You say right.

Martina. Observe this impertinent mortal a little, who would hinder husbands from beating their wives!

Mr. Robert. I recant.

Martina. What have you to do to pry into't?

Mr. Robert. Nothing.

Martina. Does it belong to you to run your nose into it.

Mr. Robert. No.

Martina. Concern yourself with your own business.

Mr. Robert. I say no more.

Martina. I have a mind to be beaten.

Mr. Robert. Agreed.

Martina. 'Tis not at your expence.

Mr. Robert. True.

Martina. And you are a sot to come thrusting in your oar where you have nothing to do. [Gives him a blow.

Mr. Robert to Sganarel.] Neighbour, I ask your pardon with all my heart. Go on, thrash, bang your wife as you shou'd; I'll help you if you will.

Sganarel. I have n't a mind to't.

Mr. Robert. Nay, that's another thing.

Sganarel. I will beat her if I will; and if I won't, I won't beat her.

Mr. Robert. Mighty well.

Sganarel. 'Tis my wife, and not yours.

Mr. Robert. Undoubtedly.

Sganarel. You have no business to command me.

Mr. Robert. Right.

Sganarel. I have nothing to do with your help.

Mr. Robert. With all my heart.

Sganarel. And you are an impertinent fellow to intrude into other people's affairs. Learn what Cicero says, that between the tree and the finger you must not thrust in the bark. [beats Mr. Robert, and drives him off,

SCENE III.

SGANAREL, MARTINA.

SGANAREL.

SO, come, let us be at peace with one another. Here shake hands.

Martina. Yes, after you have beat me in this manner?

Sganarel. That's nothing. Shake hands.

Martina. I won't.

Sganarel. Hey!

Martina. No.

Sganarel. Sweet wife.

Martina. No.

Sganarel. Come, I tell thee.

Martina. I won't do't.

Sganarel. Come, come, come.

Martina. No, I'll be in a passion.

Sganarel. Fy, 'tis a trifle. Come, come.

Martina. Let me alone.

Sganarel. Shake hands, I say.

Martina. You have us'd me too ill.

Sganarel. Well, go, I ask your pardon, let's see thy hand.

Martina. I forgive thee. [Aside.] But thou shalt pay for't.

Sganarel. You are a fool to regard that; these are trifling things, which are often necessary in friendship, and five or six strokes of a cudgel amongst people who love one another, only serve to whet the affection. Go, I'll be gone to the wood, and I promise thee above a hundred faggots to-day.

SCENE IV.

MARTINA alone.

GET thee gone, whatever face I put on't, I shall not forget my resentment, and I'm all on fire to find means of punishing thee for the blows thou hast given me.

I know well enough that a woman has always about her wherewith to be reveng'd of a husband: But that's too delicate a punishment for my hang-dog. I want a revenge that he won'd feel a little better; for this is not sufficient for the injury I've receiv'd.

SCENE V.

VALERE, LUCAS, MARTINA.

LUCAS to Valere, not seeing Martina.

I'FACKS we have ta'en the deuce of a commission on us, and I don't know, for my part, what we could think of getting by't.

Valere to Lucas, not seeing Martina.] What wouldst thou have, my honest man-nurse? We must obey our master; besides, we have both of us an interest in the health of our mistress his daughter; for her marriage, which is delayed by her disease, wou'd without doubt bring us in a reward. Horatio, who is a generous man, has the best pretension to her person; and tho' she has discovered a kindness for one Leander, you know well enough that her father would never consent to receive him for his son in-law.

Martina musing aside, thinking she's alone.] Can't I find out some device to revenge myself?

Lucas to Valere.] But what an a whim is this that's gotten into his head, since the doctors have all lost their Latin in the affair?

Valere to Lucas.] One sometimes finds by dint of searching what could not be found at first; and very often in simple places——

Martina. Yes, I must be reveng'd at any rate whatever; these strokes of the cudgel rise in my stomach, I can't digest them, and — [running against Valere and Lucas.] Oh! Gentlemen, I ask your pardon, I did not see you, for I was puzzling my brains for something that perplexes me.

Valere. Every one have their cares in this world. And we are likewise looking for what we gladly would find.

Martina. May it be any thing that I can assist you in?

Valere. Perhaps it may: we want to meet with some able man, some particular doctor, who might give some relief to our master's daughter, that's seiz'd with a distemper which has quite and clean taken away the use of her tongue. A great many physicians have already spent all their art upon her; but one sometimes finds folks with wonderful secrets, certain peculiar remedies, which very often do what the others could not do, and 'tis this we are looking for.

Martina aside.] Ha! My stars have inspired me with an admirable invention to revenge myself on my rascal! [to them.] You could never have apply'd yourselves better to meet with what you want; for we have a man, the most marvellous man in all the world, for desperate distempers.

Valere. How! Pray where can we find him.

Martina. You'll find him this moment towards that little place there, he diverts himself with cutting of wood.

Lucas. A doctor cut wood!

Valere. He diverts himself with gathering of simples, you'd say?

Martina. No. 'Tis an odd kind of a man who takes delight in it, a fantastical, fanciful, humourfome mor-

tal, and one that you'd never take for what he is; he goes dress'd in an extravagant manner, affects sometimes to appear ignorant, keeping his knowledge within him, and avoids nothing so much, as exercising the marvellous talents which heav'n has given him for medicine.

Valere. 'Tis a wonderful thing, that all your great men have still something of caprice, some small grain of folly mix'd with their learning.

Martina. The folly of this man is greater than can be believ'd, for it sometimes goes so far that he'll bear to be beat before he'll acknowledge his capacity: and I give you notice that you'll never gain your end, that he'll never own he's a doctor, if the whim is on him, unless you each take a cudgel, and bring him by strength of blows to confess at last what at first he'll conceal from you. 'Tis thus we treat him when we have occasion for him.

Valere. Strange folly!

Martina. 'Tis true: But after that you'll see he'll do miracles.

Valere. What's his name?

Martina. His name is Sganarel; but he is easie to be known. 'Tis a man who has a large black beard, and who wears a ruff, with a yellow and green coat.

Lucas. A yellow and green coat! He's the doctor of parroquets then.

Valere. But is it very true that he is so learn'd as you say?

Martina. What? Why 'tis a man that does wonders. Six months ago a woman was given over by all the other physicians: They thought her dead for six hours, and prepar'd to bury her, when they brought the man, we are speaking of, by force. Having seen her, he put

a little drop of something into her mouth ; and that very instant, she raised herself from her bed, and began immediately to walk about the room, as if nothing had been the matter.

Lucas. Hah !

Valere. This must have been some drop of drinkable gold.

Martina. That might really be. 'Tis not three weeks ago, that a young lad of twelve years old tumbled down from the top of a tower, and broke his head, arms and legs, on the pavement. They had no sooner got our man to him, but he rubb'd his body all over with a certain ointment, which he makes, and the youth immediately rais'd himself on his feet, and ran to play at chuck.

Lucas. Hah !

Valere. This same man must have the universal medicine.

Martina. Who doubts of it ?

Lucas. Ods-bobs, this is just such a man as we want ; let's go quickly and search 'en out.

Valere. We thank you for the favour you've done us.

Martina. But remember well however, the caution I have given you.

Lucas. Hey ! 'Zooks, let us alone : If he wants nothing but beating, the cow's our own.

Valere to Lucas.] We were mighty happy in meeting with this woman ; I conceive the greatest hopes from it in the world.

SCENE VI.

SGANAREL, VALERE, LUCAS.

SGANAREL comes on the stage, with a bottle in his hand, not seeing Valere or Lucas.

TOL de rol, lol dol dol.

Valere. I hear somebody singing and cutting of wood.

Sganarel. Tol, lol, dol—I'faith, I've work'd enough to drink a sup. Let's take a little breath. [He drinks.] This same wood is as salt as the devil.

Sings. *What pleasure's so great, as the bottle can give,
What music so sweet, as thy little gull, gull!*

*My fate might be envy'd by all men that live,
Were my dear jolly bottle, but constantly full.*

*Say why, my sweet bottle, I pr'ythee, say why,
Since, when full so delightful, you'll ever be dry.*
Come, 'sdeath, we must not breed melancholy.

Valere low to Lucas.] There's the very man.

Lucas low to Valere.] I think you say true, and that I've have found 'em out by my noise.

Valere. Let's see him nearer.

Sganarel hugging his bottle.] Ah! my little rogue, how I do love thee, my little corkfy! [Seeing Valere and Lucas looking at him, he lowers his voice.] My fate—might—be envy'd—by all men that live—What the duce, who do these folks want?

Valere. 'Tis he, most certainly.

Lucas to Valere.] He's as like him that was defigur'd to us, as if a had been spitten out of his mouth.

Sganarel sets down the bottle on the ground, and Valere bowing to salute him, he thinking 'tis with a

design to take it away, puts it on the other side :
Upon which Lucas doing the same thing, he takes
it up again, and holds it close to his breast, with
divers gestures, which make great dumb show.

Sganarel aside.] They consult together, and look
earnestly at me. What design can they have?

Valere. Sir, Is it not you who are call'd Sganarel?

Sganarel. Hey! What?

Valere. I ask you, if it is not you, whose name is
Sganarel?

Sganarel turning towards Valere, and then towards
Lucas.] Yes, and no, according to what you would have
with him.

Valere. Nothing, but to do him all the civilities we
could.

Sganarel. In that case, 'tis me whose name's Sganarel.

Valere. Sir, we are transported to see you; we have
been recommended to you for that we are searching after;
and we come to beg your assistance, which we want.

Sganarel. If 'tis any thing, gentlemen, that depends
upon my little employment, I am very ready to serve
you.

Valere. Sir, 'tis too great a favour that you do us:
but be cover'd, pray, Sir, the sun may incommode you.

Lucas. Cover your skull, zir.

Sganarel aside.] These people are mighty full of ce-
remony. [Puts on his hat.

Valere. Sir, you must not think strange that we come
to you: Skilful people are always sought for, and we
are inform'd of your ability.

Sganarel. 'Tis true, Sirs, that I am the first man in
the world for making of fagots.

Valere. Ah! Sir ———

Sganarel. I spare nothing in doing 'em, and make 'em after a manner that people have no reason to find fault with them.

Valere. Sir, that's not the thing in question.

Sganarel. But then I sell 'em for nine and two-pence a hundred.

Valere. Pray don't let us talk of that.

Sganarel. I assure you I can't let them go for less.

Valere. Sir, we know how things are.

Sganarel. If you know how things are, you know that I sell them so.

Valere. Sir, this is jesting, but ———

Sganarel. I do not jest, I can't bate any thing of it.

Valere. Let us talk after another manner, pray now.

Sganarel. You may get them at another place for less; there are fagots and fagots : but for those that I make——

Valere. Pray Sir, let us leave this discourse.

Sganarel. I swear to you, that you shall not have them, if you fall short a farthing of it.

Valere. Oh! fy.

Sganarel. No, o' my conscience, you shall pay that for 'em. I speak sincerely, and am not a man that would ask too much.

Valere. Should such a person as you, Sir, amuse himself with these gross dissimulations, demean himself by talking in this manner; a man so learned, such a famous physician as you are, be willing to disguise himself from the eyes of the world, and keep buried the fine talents he enjoys?

Sganarel aside.] The fellow's a fool.

Valere. Pray, Sir, don't dissemble with us.

Sganarel. What?

Lucas. All this hodge-podge signifies nought; I do know what I do know.

Sganarel. Well then, what would you say? Who do you take me for?

Valere. For what you are, for a great doctor.

Sganarel. Doctor yourself; I am not one, nor ever was.

Valere aside.] This is the folly that possesses him. [aloud.] Sir, don't be willing to deny things any longer; and let us not come, pray, to troublesome extremities.

Sganarel. To what?

Valere. To certain things which we should be sorry for.

Sganarel. 'Sdeath! come to what you please; I am not a doctor, and don't understand what you would be at.

Valere aside.] I see plainly that we must make use of the remedy. [aloud.] Sir, once more I desire you to own what you are.

Lucas. And s'bobs, don't latterlanimas it any longer, but confes vrankly that you be a doctor.

Sganarel aside.] I'm mad——

Valere. Where's the good of denying what is known?

Lucas. Wherefore all these whimsies? What service will this do you?

Sganarel. Gentlemen, in one word, as well as in two thousand, I tell you that I am not a doctor.

Valere. You are not a doctor?

Sganarel. No.

Lucas. Y'an't a doctor?

Sganarel. No, I tell you.

Valere. Since you will have it, we must betake ourselves to it then. [they take each of 'em a cudgel and thrash him.

Sganarel. Hold hold, hold, gentlemen, I'm what you please?

Valere. Why, Sir, did you oblige us to this violence?

Lucas. To what good did you make us be at the pain to beat you?

Valere. I assure you, that I did it with all the regret in the world.

Lucas. By my foith and vronkly, I did it with zorrow.

Sganarel. What the duce d'e mean, Sirs? Pray, is it out of a joke, or are you both distracted, that you will have me to be a doctor?

Valere. What won't you yield yet, and do you deny that you are a physician?

Sganarel. The devil take me if I am one.

Lucas. E'nt it true, that you do understood physick?

Sganarel. No, Plague choke me if I do. [They begin to beat him again.] Hold, hold; well gentlemen, yes, since you will have it so, I am a doctor, I am a doctor; an apothecary too, if you think good. I rather choosse to agree to every thing than suffer myself to be knock'd o' the head.

Valere. Ay, now things go well, Sir; I'm transported to see you're become reasonable.

Lucas. You give me a heart full of joy to zee you talk in this monner.

Valere. I ask your pardon with all my soul.

Lucas. I'll demand excuse for the liberty ic' have ta'en.

Sganarel aside.] Whu, have I really deceived myself then, and am I become a doctor without knowing it?

Valere. You shall not repent, Sir, discovering to us what you are; and you'll certainly see that you'll be satisfy'd for it.

Sganarel. But, gentlemen, tell me, don't you deceive yourselves? Is it very sure that I am a doctor?

Lucas. Yes, by my foith.

Sganarel. In good earnest?

Valere. Undoubtedly.

Sganarel. The devil take me if I knew it.

Valere. How! You are the most able physician in the world.

Sganarel. Ay! Ay!

Lucas. A doctor, that has healed I know not how many ailments.

Sganarel. O dear!

Valere. A woman was taken for dead six hours, she was just ready to be buried, when with one drop of a certain thing you brought her to life again, and made her walk immediately about the room.

Sganarel. The plague I did!

Lucas. A little lad of a dozen year old, fell from the top of a steeple, whereupon a had his head, legs, and arms broken; and you, with I know not what ointment, made 'en soon scramble up on his feet, and scour away to play at chuck.

Sganarel. The devil!

Valere. In short, Sir, you shall have satisfaction with us: and you may gain whatever you will, if you'll but suffer us to conduct you to where we want you.

Sganarel. I may gain what I will?

Valere. Yes.

Sganarel. Oh! I'm a doctor without dispute: I had forgot it, but I remember it now. What's the affair? Where must I transport myself to?

Valere. We'll conduct you. The affair is to go see a young lady who has lost her speech.

Sganarel. Faith I have not found it.

Valere to Lucas.] He loves to joke. [to Sganarel.] come, Sir.

Sganarel, Without a doctor's gown?

Valere. We'll procure you one.

Sganarel offering his bottle to Valere.] Do you hold that: That's where I put my julep. [then turns towards Lucas and spits.] Walk you over that by prescription of the doctor.

Lucas. By the mass this is a doctor that pleases me; I believe that he'll succeed, he's such a merry fellow.

ACT II. SCENE I.

GERONTE, VALERE, LUCAS, JACQUELINE,

VALERE.

YES, Sir, I believe you will be satisfied; for we have brought you the greatest physician in the world.

Lucas. Adzfooks, none can be better; all the others be not worthy to clean his shoes for'n.

Valere. 'Tis one who has done marvellous cures.

Lucas. Who has heal'd folk that were dead.

Valere. He's a little whimsical, as I told you; and i'faith there are times when his senses give him the slip, and he does not appear to be what he is.

Lucas. Yes, a loves to play the wag, and foith they do say, no offence, that a have had a small knock o' the crown with an ax.

Valere. But he's all skill at the bottom; and he often says things extremely sublime.

Lucas. When a gives his mind to't, a talks as vine exactly as tho'f a read in a book.

Valere. His reputation is already spread round here; and all the world come to him.

Geronte. I've a vast desire to see him; bring him to me immediately.

Valere. I'll go look for him.

SCENE II.

GERONTE, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

JACQUELINE.

BY my trath, zir, this will do just what the others ha' done. I fe believe that he'll be so good so bad; and the best physician you can gee your daughter, according to my notion, is a good hondsome husband for whom she has a kindness.

Geronte. Good-lack, my sweet nurse, you meddle with many things.

Lucas. Hold your peace, our huswife Jacqueline; it don't belong to you to thrust in your nose there.

Jacqueline. I tell you, and both o'ye, that all these physicians will do her no more good than a glass of fair water; that your daughter has need o' somewhat else than rhuburb and zena; and that a husband's a plaster which cures all the ailments of young women.

Geronte. Is she in a condition now, that any one would burthen himself with her with the infirmity she has? And when I had a design of marrying her, did she not oppose my intentions?

Jacqueline. I believe so truly, you wou'd a given her a mon she doan't like. Wherefore did not you not offer her this same Mr. Liander, who has gotten her heart? She'd been mighty obedient, and I'll wager that he'll take her as she is, if yow'd but give her to him.

Geronte. This Leander is not the man she must have; he has not the wealth which the other has.

Jacqueline. He has an nuncle that's mortal rich, whose heritage a is to be.

Geronte. All these riches to come, appear to me as mere songs. There's nothing like what people are in possession of; and we run a great risque of being cozen'd when we reckon up riches which are kept for us by others. Death has not always open ears to the wishes and prayers of your gentlemen inheritors, and they have time to be sharp set, who wait for somebody's decease before they can eat.

Jacqueline. In short, I've often heard say, that in marriage, as in other affairs, contentment is beyond riches. Vathers and mothers ha' the cursed custom of asking alway, what han he, and what han she? And gaffer Piarre has married his girl Simounetta to fatt Tumas, because a had a scrap of a vineyard more than young Robin, where she had placed her liking; and there the poor creature is gone as yallow as a quince, and has gotten nothing all the whoile. This is a foin example for you, zir; folk have nothing but their pleasure in this world; and I should rather choose to gee my girl a good husband, that was agreeerble to her, than all the incomes o' the country.

Geronte. Plague! Mrs. Nurse, how you prate! hold your peace pray; you take too much trouble on you, and will overheat your milk.

Lucas striking Geronte on the shoulders at the end of every sentence.] S'bobs, hold your tongue, you are an impartinont huswife. Maister ha' nothing to do with thy preachments; he knows what a mun do. Mind to gee your child the breast, without being so much upon the reasonous. Maister is his daughter's vather, and he's a good mon, and a woife one, and knows what to do in the case.

Geronte. Oh! Softly, softly.

Lucas [striking Geronte on the shoulders again.] Sir, I'll mortify her a bit, and learn her the respect she owes you.

Geronte. Yes, but these actions are not necessary.

SCENE III.

VALERE, SGANAREL, GERONTE,
LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

VALERE.

SIR, prepare yourself, this is your doctor, that's coming in.

Geronte to Sganarel.] Sir, I'm transported to see you at my house, for we have great occasion for you.

Sganarel in a physician's gown, with a high crown'd hat.] Hypocrates says,—let's both be cover'd.

Geronte. Does Hypocrates say so?

Sganarel. Yes.

Geronte. In what chapter pray?

Sganarel. In his chapter—upon hats.

Geronte. Since Hypocrates says so, it must be done.

Sganarel. Mr. Doctor, having heard of the wonderful things—

Geronte. Who do you speak to, pray?

Sganarel. To you.

Geronte. I am not a doctor.

Sganarel. You are not a doctor?

Geronte. No indeed.

Sganarel. Seriously?

Geronte. Seriously. [Sganarel takes a cudgel and beats

Geronte.] Oh! oh! oh!

Sganarel. Now you are a doctor then, I had never any other licence.

Geronte to Valere.] What devil of a fellow have you brought me here?

Valere. I told you justly that 'twas a droll doctor.

Geronte. Yes; but I shall send him a going with his drollery.

Lucas. Don't mind this, maister, 'tis only for a joke.

Geronte. This kind of joking does not please me.

Sganarel. Sir, I ask pardon for the liberty I've taken.

Geronte. Sir, your servant.

Sganarel. I'm sorry ———

Geronte. 'Tis nothing at all.

Sganarel. For the strokes of the cudgel ———

Geronte. There's no harm.

Sganarel. Which I've had the honour to give you.

Geronte. Let us talk no more of that. I have a daughter, Sir, who is fallen into a strange disease.

Sganarel. I'm rejoic'd, Sir, that your daughter has need of me; and I wish with all my heart that you had the same occasion likewise, you and all your family, that I might manifest the desire I have of serving you.

Geronte. I'm oblig'd to you for your good wishes.

Sganarel. I assure you 'tis from the bottom of my soul that I speak it.

Geronte. 'Tis too great an honour you do me —

Sganarel. What is your daughter's name?

Geronte. Lucinda.

Sganarel. Lucinda! O! a charming name to act the doctor on! Lucinda!

Geronte. I'll go and see a little what she's doing.

Sganarel. Who is that jolly dame there?

Geronte. She's nurse to a young child of mine.

SCENE IV.

SGANAREL, JACQUELINE, LUCAS.

SGANAREL *aside*.

'S LIFE! What a lovely piece of stuff it is! Nurse! Charming nurse, my doctorship is the very humble slave of your nurseship, and I heartily wish I were the happy bantling that sucks the milk of your good graces. [Putting his hand on her bosom.] All my medicines, all my skill, all my capacity is at your service, and —

Lucas. With your leave, Mr. Doctor, pray now let alone my wife.

Sganarel. What, is she your wife?

Lucas. Yes.

Sganarel. Hah! I did not know it truly, but am rejoic'd at it out of love to you both. [Making as if he would embrace Lucas, embraces the nurse.]

Lucas drawing Sganarel away, and stepping between him and his wife.] Softly, an you please.

Sganarel. I do assure you that I'm overjoy'd at your being join'd together. I congratulate her on having such a husband as you; and I congratulate you on having so handsome a wife, one so discreet and so well made as she is. [He makes again as if he would embrace Lucas, and slipping under his arm, embraces the nurse.]

Lucas drawing him away again.] 'Sbobs not so many complamants, I beseech ye!

Sganarel. Would not' you have me rejoice with you for so lovely a conjunction?

Lucas. With me as much an you please; but forbear sarimony with my wife.

THE MOCK-DOCTOR. 187

Sganarel. I take an equal part in both your good fortunes; and if I embrace you to witness my joy to you, I embrace her to witness the same to her,

[Continuing the same action.

Lucas drawing him away the third time.] 'Sbodakins, Mr. Doctor, what vagaries are here!

SCENE V.

GERONTE, SGANAREL, LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

GERONTE,

SIR, they'll bring my daughter to you immediately.

Sganarel. I attend her, Sir, with all the power of medicine.

Geronte. Where is it?

Sganarel touching his forehead.] Within here.

Geronte. Mighty well.

Sganarel. But as I am concern'd for all your family, I must make a trial of your nurse's milk a little, and visit her breast.

Lucas drawing him away, and whisking him round.] Nayh, nayh, I doant want that to be done.

Sganarel. 'Tis the office of a doctor to inspect into the nipples of nurses.

Lucas. Be't your office how 'twill, I'm your zarvant for that.

Sganarel. Hast thou really the impudence to contradict a physician? Out there.

Lucas. I'll laugh at that.

Sganarel looking askew at him.] I'll give thee a fever.

Jacqueline taking Lucas by the arm, and whisking him round.] Get thee gone hence; am not I big enough to

defend myself, if he does any thing to me that he should not do?

Lucas. I won't have him meddle with thee.

Sganarel. Fy on the rascal, he's jealous of his wife.

Geronte. Here's my daughter.

SCENE VI.

LUCINDA, GERONTE, SGANAREL, VALERE,
LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

SGANAREL.

IS this the sick person?

Geronte. Yes, I've no daughter but she, and I should be in the utmost grief were she to die.

Sganarel. Let her take great care of that; she must not die without the doctor's order.

Geronte. A chair here.

Sganarel sits between Geronte and Lucinda.] This is a patient who is not so very distasteful, and I hold that a man in good health might make a shift well enough with her.

Geronte. You have made her laugh, Sir.

Sganarel. So much the better, when the doctor makes the patient laugh, 'tis the best symptom in the world. [to Lucinda.] Well, what's the case? what ails you? what's the disorder you feel?

Lucinda putting her hand to her mouth, head, and under her chin.] Han, hi, hon, han.

Sganarel. Hey! what d'e say?

Lucinda continuing the same motions.] Han, hi, hon, han, han, hi, hon.

Sganarel.

Sganarel. What?

Lucinda. Han, hi, hon.

Sganarel. Han, hi, hon, han, ha. I don't understand you. What the deuce of a language is this?

Geronte. That's her distemper, Sir: She's become dumb, and we have not yet been able to find out the cause of it; which accident has occasioned her marriage to be retarded.

Sganarel. Why so?

Geronte. He whom she was to marry, would wait till she was cur'd, before he'd bring things to a conclusion.

Sganarel. And who is this sot, who would not have his wife dumb? Would to heaven that mine had the same disease! I should take sufficient care not to have her cur'd.

Geronte. In short, Sir, we must entreat you to employ your utmost application to alleviate her illness.

Sganarel. O! don't put yourself in pain about it. But tell me a little; does this illness oppress her very much?

Geronte. Yes, Sir.

Sganarel. So much the better. Does she feel any great pains?

Geronte. Very great.

Sganarel. That's mighty well. Does she go you know where?

Geronte. Yes.

Sganarel. Plentifully?

Geronte. I know nothing of that.

Sganarel. Is the discharge laudable?

Geronte. I'm not skill'd in those things.

Sganarel to Lucinda. Give me your arm. [to Geronte.] Here's a pulse which denotes that your daughter is dumb.

Geronte. Why truly, Sir, that's her disease, you have found it out all at the first touch.

Sganarel. Ay, lay.

Jacqueline. Do but see how a has divoin'd her ailment.

Sganarel. We great doctors know things instantly. An ignorant fellow would have been puzzled, and would have told you 'tis this, and 'tis that; but for my part, I hit the nail on the head, the very first stroke, and acquaint you that your daughter is dumb.

Geronte. Yes; but I should be glad that you could tell from whence that came.

Sganarel. There's nothing more easy. It came from hence, that she has lost her speech.

Geronte. Very good: but the cause, pray, which made her lose her speech?

Sganarel. All our best authors will inform you, that 'tis an impediment in the action of her tongue.

Geronte. But your sentiments moreover, upon this impediment in the action of the tongue.

Sganarel. Aristotle says upon it—mighty fine things.

Geronte. I believe it.

Sganarel. Ah! that same was a great man.

Geronte. No doubt.

Sganarel. A mighty great man: a man that was greater [holding out his arm from his elbow.] than me by all this. But to return to our reasoning: I hold, that this impediment in the action of her tongue, is caused by certain humours, which amongst us scholars, are called peccant humours; peccant, that's to say—peccant humours; so that the vapours formed by the exhalations of influences which rise in the region of diseases, coming—as we may say—to—Do you understand Latin?

Geronte. Nor in the least.

Sganarel getting up hastily.] You don't understand Latin!

Geronte. No.

Sganarel, making divers diverting postures.] *Cabrias arci thuram, catalamas, singulariter, nominativo, haec musa, the muse, bonus, bona, bonum, Deus sanctus, est ne oratio latinas? etiam, Yes. Quare, wherefore? quia substantivo, & adjectivum, concordat in generi, numerum, & casus.*

Geronte. Ah! wherefore did not I study!

Jacqueline. What a learned man is this!

Lucas. Yes, this is so vine, that I don't understand a syllable of't.

Sganarel. For these vapours that I speak to you of, passing from the left side, where the liver is, to the right side, where the heart is, finds that the lungs, which we call in Latin, *armyan*, having communication with the brain, which in Greek we name, *nasmus*, by means of the hollow vein, which in Hebrew we call, *cubile*, meets in its way the said vapours, which fill the ventricles of the omoplate: and because the said vapours—comprehend this reasoning, well, I pray you; and because the said vapours have a certain malignity—attend well to this, I conjure you.

Geronte. Yes.

Sganarel. Have a certain malignity which is caus'd—be attentive, if you please.

Geronte. I am so.

Sganarel. Which is caus'd by the acrimony of the humours engender'd in the concavity of the diaphragm, it comes to pass, that these vapours—*Ossabandus, nequeis, nequer, potarium, quipsa milus*. That's exactly the cause of your daughter's being dumb.

Jacqueline. Ah! that's foinsly zaid, oor mon!

Lucas. Why ha' not I a tongue so well hang'd?

Geronte. No body could reason better undoubtedly. There's but one thing in it which stuck in my stomach; and that's the place of the liver and heart. I apprehend that you place them otherwise than they are: that the heart is on the left-side, and the liver on the right-side.

Sganarel. Yes, it was formerly so; but we have altered all that, and we now practise medicine after quite a new method.

Geronte. That's what I did not know, and I ask your pardon for my ignorance.

Sganarel. There's no harm; you are not oblig'd to be as learned as Us.

Geronte. True: but Sir, what think you must be done with this disease?

Sganarel. What do I think must be done?

Geronte. Yes.

Sganarel. My advice is, that they put her to bed; and that they make her take for a remedy, a quantity of bread soak'd in wine.

Geronte. Wherefore that, Sir?

Sganarel. Because, that in bread and wine mixed together, there's a sympathetic virtue, which occasions talking. Don't you plainly see, that they give no other thing to parrots, and that by eating this they learn to talk?

Geronte. That's true. Oh! the great man! Quickly, a quantity of bread and wine.

Sganarel. I'll return in the evening, to see what condition she'll be in.

SCENE VII.

GERONTE, SGANAREL, JACQUELINE.

SGANAREL to Jacqueline.

SOFTLY, you. [to Geronte.] Sir, here's a nurse, for whom I must make up some few remedies.

Jacqueline. Who I? I ha' the best health in the world.

Sganarel. So much the worse, nurse, so much the worse. This high health is to be feared; and it won't be amiss to give you a little gentle-bleeding, and administer a little dulcifying clyster.

Geronte. But, Sir, this is a method which I don't comprehend. Why let her blood, when she has no illness?

Sganarel. No matter, the method is salutary; and as one drinks for thirst to come, one must likewise bleed for illness to come.

Jacqueline going.] Trath, I laugh at that; I'll not make a poticary's shop o' my carcass.

Sganarel. You are averse to physic; but we can make you subject to reason.

SCENE VIII.

GERONTE, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

I GIVE you good-morrow, Sir.

Geronte. Stay a little, if you please.

Sganarel. What would you do?

Geronte. Give you a fee, Sir.

Sganarel reaching out his hand behind him, while Geronte opens his purse.] I won't take it, Sir.

Geronte. Sir.

Sganarel. No.

Geronte. Stay one moment.

Sganarel. By no means.

Geronte. Pray now.

Sganarel. You mistake.

Geronte. 'Tis done presently.

Sganarel. I won't do it.

Geronte. Hey!

Sganarel. 'Tis not mony that induces me to practise.

Geronte. I believe it.

Sganarel after having taken the mony.] Is this weight?

Geronte. Yes, Sir.

Sganarel. I am not a mercenary physician.

Geronte. I know it well.

Sganarel. Interest does not govern me.

Geronte. I have not that thought.

Sganarel alone, looking on the mony he had receiv'd.]
Faith this does not go ill, and provided that—

SCENE IX.

LEANDER, SGANAREL.

LEANDER.

SIR, I have waited for you a long time, and am come to implore your assistance.

Sganarel feeling his pulse.] A very bad pulse this.

Leander. I am not sick, Sir; nor is it for that I come to you.

Sganarel. If you are not sick, why the duce did you not say so?

Leander. No. To inform you of the affair in two words, my name is Leander, and I'm in love with Lucinda, whom you come to visit: But as all manner of access to her is block'd up from me by the ill temper of her father, I run the hazard of entreating you to endeavour to serve me in my amour, and to give me an opportunity of executing a stratagem I've invented, to be able to speak a word or two with her, on which my life and happiness absolutely depend.

Sganarel. Who d'ye take me for? What? Dare you apply to me to serve you in your amour, and to debase the dignity of a physician by employments of this kind?

Leander. Don't make a noise, Sir?

Sganarel making him retreat.] I will do it; you are an impertinent fellow.

Leander. Oh! Sir, softly.

Sganarel. An inconsiderate jackanapes.

Leander. Pray now.

Sganarel. I'll teach you that I'm not such a man, and that 'tis an extreme piece of insolence——

Leander taking out a purse.] Sir.

Sganarel taking the purse.] To think of employing me—I don't speak as to you, for you are an honest man, and I should rejoice to do you service. But there are certain impertinent creatures in the world, who take people for what they are not; and this, I must own to you puts me in a passion.

Leander. I ask your pardon, Sir, for the liberty that——

Sganarel. You jest. What's the business?

Leander. Know then, Sir, that this disease which you would cure, is a feigned disease. The doctors have reason'd upon it as they should do, and have not failed to

say that it proceeds, one from the brain, one from the intestines, one from the spleen, one from the liver; but 'tis certain that love's the true cause of it, and that Lucinda counterfeited this disease only to deliver herself from a match which she had been importun'd to. But for fear they should see us together, let us retire from hence, and I'll tell you as we go, what I wish from you.

Sganarel. Come, Sir, you have given me an inconceivable sensibility for your love; and I'll spend all my physic in the affair, but the patient shall kick up, or else be yours.

ACT III. SCENE I.

LEANDER, SGANAREL.

LEANDER.

METHINKS I am not amiss thus for an apothecary, and as the father has scarce ever seen me, this change of dress and perruke is sufficient, I believe, to disguise me.

Sganarel. Undoubtedly.

Leander. All I could wish, would be to know five or six strong physical terms, to adorn my discourse, and give me the air of a learned man.

Sganarel. Come come, all that's not necessary; the habit sufficeth; I know no more of the matter than you.

Leander. What!

Sganarel. The duce take me, if I understand any thing of physic. You are a gentleman, and I'll repose a confidence in you, as you have in me.

Leander. What, you are not actually—

Sganarel. No, I tell you, they made me a doctor in spite of my teeth. I never attempted to be so learned as that; my studies lasted only 'till I was six years old.

I know not by what means this notion is come to 'em: but when I found that they would make me a doctor by violence, I resolv'd to be one at the expence of those I might have to do with. Nevertheless, you can't imagine how the error is spread about, and in what manner ev'ry one's possess'd to believe me a skilful man. They come to seek me from all parts; and if things go on always the same, I intend to keep to physick all my lifetime. I find 'tis the best trade of all; for be it that we do good, or be it that we do ill, we are always paid after the same rate. The bad work never falls upon our back, and we cut out as we please the stuff we work on. A shoe-maker can't spoil a scrap of leather in making a pair of shoes, but he's oblig'd to pay sauce for it, when here we may spoil a man without costing one any thing. The blunders are not ours; the fault's always in him that dies. In short, the good of this profession is, that amongst the dead there is an honesty, a discretion the greatest in the world; you never find 'em complain of the physician that kill'd 'em.

Leander. 'Tis true, the dead are very honest people in this respect.

[Sganarel observing men coming to him.] Here are people who look as if they came to consult me. [to Leander.] Go and wait for me near your mistress's house.

SCENE II.

THIBAUT, PERRIN, SGANAREL.

THIBAUT.

ZIR, we come to search for ye, Zou Perrin and L. Sganarel. What's the matter?

Thibaut. His poor mother, whose name is Parette, has been this six months in a sick bed.

Sganarel holding out his hand as to receive money.] What would you have me do to her?

Thibaut. I'll have her, sir, give us some little drug-gery ware to heal her withal:

Sganarel. I must see what she's sick of.

Thibaut. She's sick of an hypocrisy, sir.

Sganarel. Of an hypocrisy?

Thibaut. Ay, that's to say, she's bloated up all over, and folk do say that 'tis a deal of zeriostities that she have in her body, and that her liver, her belly, or her spleen as you would call it, in place of making blood make nothing but water. She has one day out of two, the quotidian fever, with lassitudes and pains in the muscles of her legs. One hears screams in her throat that are even ready to choke her. Sometimes she's taken with syncops and conversions, that we do think, she's gone off. We have in our parish, a poticary, with reverence be it spoken, who has given her I know not how much histories, and 'tave cost me more than a dozen of good crowns in clysters may't please you, in apoplexies which they made her take, in hyacinth infusions, and cordial portions. But all this, as they say, was nothing but a nointment of fiddle-faddle. He'd 'a given her some of a certain drug, which they call amelite wine; but I was under down-right fear, that 'twould send her to her fore-fathers, for they say, that these great doctors kill I know not how many people with that same invention.

Sganarel holding his hand out all the while.] Let's come to the point, friend, let's come to the point.

Thibaut. The point is, sir, that we are come to bag o'ye, to tell us what we must do.

Sganarel. I don't understand you in the least.

Perrin. My mother is zick, zir, and here be two crawns which we ha' brought 'ye to gee us some cure.

Sganarel. Oh! I understand you. There's a lad that speaks clearly, and explains himself as he should do. You say that your mother is sick of a dropsy, that she's swell'd all over the body, that she has a fever, with pains in her legs, and that she's taken by turns, with sincofes and convulsions, that's to say, with fainting fits.

Perrin. Ay, yes, zir, that's exactly the matter.

Sganarel. I comprehended at once, what you said. You have a father who does not know what he says. Now then you'd have a remedy from me?

Perrin. Ay, zir.

Sganarel. A remedy to cure her.

Perrin. That's what I mean.

Sganarel. Take this, there's a piece of cheefe, which you must make her take.

Perrin. Cheefe, zir?

Sganarel. Yes, 'tis prepared cheefe, in which there is mix'd gold, coral, pearls, and abundance of other costly things.

Perrin. Zir, we're mainly oblig'd t'ye, and we'll go make her take it this very instont.

Sganarel. Go. If she dies, don't fail to have her buried as handsomely as you can.

SCENE III.

JACQUELINE, SGANAREL, LUCAS
at the farther end of the stage.

SGANAREL.

HERE'S the jolly nurse. Ah! Nurse of my heart, I'm transported with this meeting; the sight of you is

rhubarb, cassia, and senna, which purge away all melancholy from my mind.

Jacqueline. By my trath, Mr. Doctor, that's too foirly said for me, I've doant understond your Lattan at all.

Sganarel. Get sick I beseech you, nurse, get sick for my sake. I should take all the pleasure in the world to cure you.

Jacqueline. Your zarvant, zir, I'd much rather choofe not to be cur'd.

Sganarel. I pity you, fair nurse, in having such a jealous troublesome husband as he you have.

Jacqueline. What would ye ha' me do, Zir, 'tis a penitence for my offences, and where the goat's ty'd, there she must brouze.

Sganarel. What? such a rustic as that? A fellow that watches you continually, and won't let any body speak to you?

Jacqueline. Alack, you've not zeen any thing of'n yet; this is nothing but a small zample of his ill-nature.

Sganarel. Is it possible, and can a fellow have so mean a spirit, as to use such a person as you are, ill? Ah! there are some, sweet nurse, that I know, and who are not far from hence, that would think themselves happy but to kiss the little tops of your toes! Why should one so well made, fall into such hands? A mere animal, a brute, a fool, a sot—forgive me, nurse, for speaking in this manner of your husband.

Jacqueline. Ah! Sir, I've know well enow that a deserves all those naines.

Sganarel. Ay, undoubtedly, nurse, he does deserve 'em, and he deserves farther that you should plant something on his head, to punish him for the suspicions he has.

Jacqueline. 'Tis very true, that if I've had nothing

THE MOCK-DOCTOR. 307

in sight but his interest, it might drive me to do some strange thing.

Sganarel. I'faith you'd not do ill to be revenged on him with some-one. 'Tis a fellow, I tell you, who richly deserves it, and if I were fortunate enough, fair nurse, to be pitch'd on for—[Whilst Sganarel reaches out his arm to embrace Jacqueline, Lucas thrusts his head under his arm, and steps between them; Sganarel and Jacqueline look at Lucas, and go off on different sides.

SCENE IV.

GERONTE, LUCAS.

GERONTE.

H O, Lucas, hast thou not seen our doctor here?

Lucas. Yes, the deuce had 'en, I'se ha' zeen him, and my wife too.

Geronte. Where is't that he can be then?

Lucas. I don't know; but I wish he were at the devil.

Geronte. Go and see a little how my daughter does.

SCENE V.

SGANAREL, LEANDER, GERONTE.

GERONTE.

O H, Sir, I have been asking where you was.

Sganarel. I was amusing myself in your court, to carry off the superfluity of the liquor. How does the patient do?

Geronte. A little worse since your remedy.

Sganarel. So much the better. 'Tis a sign it operates.

Geronte. Yes; but I fear lest it choke her in operating.

Sganarel. Don't be in pain about that; I have me-

dicines which despise all distempers, and I should be glad to see her at death's door.

Geronte. Who is this man you bring here?

Sganarel making signs with his hand, that it is an apothecary.] 'Tis —

Geronte. What?

Sganarel. He —

Geronte. Hey!

Sganarel. Who —

Geronte. I understand you.

Sganarel. Your daughter will have occasion for him.

SCENE VI.

LUCINDA, GERONTE, LEANDER,
JACQUELINE, SGANAREL.

JACQUELINE.

HERE, Zir, is your daughter, she desires to walk a little.

Sganarel. That will do her good. [to Leander.] Go to her, Mr. Apothecary, feel her pulse a little, that I may consult with you by and by about her distemper. [Here he takes Geronte to one end of the stage, and putting one arm over his shoulder, puts his hand under his chin, to prevent him from turning his head towards Leander and Lucinda.] Sir, 'tis a great and subtle question amongst the doctors, whether women are more easy to cure than men. Pray hearken to this if you please. Some say no, others say yes; and for my part, I say both yes and no, forasmuch as the incongruity of the opaque humours which meet in the natural modification of women, being the cause that the brutal part will always bear rule over the sensitive, we see that the in-

equality of their opinions depends on the oblique motion of the circle of the moon, and as the sun which darts its rays on the concavity of the earth, finds ———

Lucinda to Leander.] No, I'm not capable of changing my sentiments.

Geronte. My daughter speaks! O the great power of medicine! O wonderful physician! How much am I oblig'd to you, Sir, for this marvellous cure, and what can I do for you, after such a piece of service!

Sganarel walking about the stage, and fanning himself with his hat.] This distemper has put me to a vast deal of pains.

Lucinda. Yes, father, I have recover'd my speech: but I've recover'd it to tell you that I will never have any other husband than Leander, and that 'tis in vain you intend to give me Horatio.

Geronte. But ———

Lucinda. Nothing is capable of shaking the resolution I have taken.

Geronte. What!

Lucinda. You'll oppose me in vain with fine arguments.

Geronte. If ———

Lucinda. All your talk will signify nothing.

Geronte. I ———

Lucinda. 'Tis a thing I'm determin'd on.

Geronte. But ———

Lucinda. 'Tis not paternal power that shall oblige me to marry whether I will or not.

Geronte. I have ———

Lucinda. You have liberty to make all your efforts.

Geronte. It ———

Lucinda. My heart cannot submit to this tyranny.

Geronte. There ———

Lucinda. And I'll rather cast myself into a convent than marry a man I don't like.

Geronte. But ———

Lucinda. No. By no means. Not at all. You lose your time. I will not do it. That's resolv'd.

Geronte. Oh! what an impetuosity of speech! There's no way of resisting it. [to Sganarel.] Sir, I desire you'll make her dumb again.

Sganarel. 'Tis a thing which is impossible to me. All I can do to serve you, is to make you deaf, if you will.

Geronte. I thank you. [to Lucinda.] think then—

Lucinda. No, all your reasons will gain nothing on my mind.

Geronte. Thou shalt marry Horatio this night.

Lucinda. I'll rather marry death.

Sganarel to Geronte.] Good now, hold a little, let me prescribe in this affair. 'Tis a disease that affects her, and I know what remedy must be applied to it.

Geronte. Is it possible, Sir, that you can likewise cure this sickness of the mind?

Sganarel. Yes, let me alone, I have remedies for every thing; and our apothecary will assist us in this cure. [to Leander.] One word. You see that the affection she has for this Leander, is altogether contrary to her father's will, that there's no time to lose, that the humours are very acrimonious, and that 'tis necessary to find out speedily a remedy for this illness, which may get a head by delay; for my part I can see but only one for it, which is a doze of run-away purgative mix'd as it shou'd be with too drachms of matrimonium in pills. Perhaps she'll make some difficulty of taking this medicine, but as you are an able man in your business, it belongs to

you to bring her to it, and to make her swallow the thing as well as you can. Go and make her take a little turn in the garden, in order to prepare the humours, whilst I hold her father here in discourse: but above all lose no time. To the remedy, quick, to the specific remedy.

SCENE VII.

GERONTE, SGANAREL.

GERONTE.

WHAT drugs, Sir, are those you were speaking of? I think that I never heard 'em nam'd before.

Sganarel. They are drugs which people make use of upon urgent occasions.

Geronte. Did you ever see an insolence like to hers?

Sganarel. Girls are sometimes a little headstrong.

Geronte. You can't think how she dotes upon this Leander.

Sganarel. The heat of the blood occasions this in young minds.

Geronte. For my part, ever since I discover'd the violence of this love I have always kept my girl shut up.

Sganarel. You have done wisely.

Geronte. And I effectually prevented their having any communication together.

Sganarel. Mighty well.

Geronte. Some folly would have come on't, had I suffer'd them to see one another.

Sganarel. Undoubtedly.

Geronte. And I believe the girl would have run away with him.

Sganarel. 'Tis well reason'd.
 Geronte. They tell me that he does his utmost endeavours to come to the speech of her.

Sganarel. Ridiculous creature!

Geronte. But he'll lose his time.

Sganarel. Ay, ay.

Geronte. For I'll effectually prevent him from seeing of her.

Sganarel. He has not to do with a fool; you know tricks that he knows nothing of. He's no blockhead who is sharper than you.

SCENE VIII.

LUCAS, GERONTE, SGANAREL.

LUCAS.

AD'S bobs, Zir, here's a vine burly-burly business; your daughter's fled away with her Liander. 'Twas he that was the poticary; and there's Mr. Doctor that ha' made this vine operation.

Geronte. What, murder me in this manner? Here, a commissary, and hinder him from going off. Ah, villain, I'll make thee suffer the law.

Lucas. Ah! I'foith, Mr. Doctor, you shall be hang'd; only budge not from hence.

SCENE IX.

MARTINA, SGANAREL, LUCAS.

MARTINA to Lucas.

AD'S my life, what plague have I had to find out this house! Tell me some news a little of the doctor I gave you.

THE MOCK-DOCTOR. 307

Lucas. There a is, just going to be hang'd.

Martina. What, my husband hang'd? Alas! what has he done to come to that?

Lucas. He ha' made our maister's daughter to be carried off.

Martina. Alas! my dear husband, is it really true that they are going to hang thee?

Sganarel. Thou see'st. Ah!

Martina. Must thou die in the presence of so many people?

Sganarel. What wouldst thou have me do in it?

Martina. Yet if thou hadst but made an end of cutting our wood, I could have taken some comfort.

Sganarel. Be gone from hence; you break my heart.

Martina. No; I'll stay to encourage thee to die; I'll not leave thee till I have seen thee hang'd.

Sganarel. Oh!

SCENE X.

GERONTE, SGANAREL, MARTINA.

GERONTE to Sganarel.

THE commissary will come presently, and they'll put you in a place, where they shall be answerable to me for you.

Sganarel kneeling.] Alas! can't this be changed into a few strokes of a cudgel?

Geronte. No, no, justice shall order it. But what do I see?

SCENE THE LAST.

GERONTE, LEANDER, LUCINDA, SGANAREL,
LUCAS, JACQUELINE.

LEANDER.

SIR, I'm come to make Leander appear before you, and to put Lucinda again in your power. We had both of us a design to go off together, and be married; but this enterprize has given place to a more honourable proceeding. I don't design to rob you of your daughter, and 'tis from your hand alone that I'll receive her. What I would say to you, Sir, is, that I have just now received letters, by which I learn that my uncle is dead, and that I am heir to all his effects.

Geronte. Sir, your virtue is to me of sufficient value, and I give you my daughter with the greatest pleasure in the world.

Sganarel aside,] There physic has got a notable 'scape!

Martina. Since you'll not be hang'd, thank me for your being a doctor; for 'twas I that procur'd thee that honour.

Sganarel. Yes, 'twas you that procured me I know not how many thwacks of a cudgel.

Leander to Sganarel.] The effect is too good to resent that.

Sganarel. Be it so. [to Martina] I forgive thee those blows, in favour of the dignity thou hast raised me to: but prepare thyself from henceforth, to live in great respect with a man of my consequence, and consider that the wrath of a physician is more to be fear'd than can be imagin'd.

7 MA 55
THE END.

R.

T.

AREL,

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D O N J O H N,

OR

The FEAST of the STATUE.

A

C O M E D Y.

SCENE, SICILY.

A C T O R S.

DON JOHN, son to Don Lewis.

ELVIRA, wife to Don John.

GUSMAN, gentleman-usher to Elvira.

DON CARLOS, } Brothers to Elvira.
DON ALONZO, }

DON LEWIS, father to Don John.

FRANCISCO, a poor man.

CHARLOTTA, } Country-girls.
MATHURINA, }

PIERROT, a country-fellow.

The statue of the governor.

SGANAREL, }
VIOLETTE, } Lacquies to Don John.
RAGOTIN, }

Mr. DIMANCHE, a tradesman.

RAMEE, a bully.

GHOST.



SCENE, SICILY.

DON JOHNS,

OR

The FEAST of the STATUE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

SGANAREL, GUSMAN.

SGANAREL, with a tobacco-box in his hand.

WHATEVER Aristotle and the whole body of philosophers may say, there's nothing comparable to tobacco; 'tis the reigning passion of your better sort of people, and he who lives without tobacco, deserves not to live; it not only exhilarates and purges human brains; but it also trains the mind to virtue, and by this one learns to become well-bred. Don't you see plainly, from the time one takes it, in what an obliging-manner one uses it with all the world, and how one is delighted to give it to right and left wherever one comes? one don't even stay to be ask'd for it, but prevents people's wishes: so true it is, that tobacco inspires all who take it with sentiments of honour and virtue. But enough of this matter; let us resume our discourse a little. So that, dear Gusman, Donna

312 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Elvira your mistress, being surpris'd at our departure, is come after us : And that heart of hers, which my master has touch'd a little too home, cannot subsist, you say, without coming here in search of him. Wou'dst thou ha' me, under the rose, tell thee my thoughts? I fear she'll be ill-requited for her love, that her journey to this city will produce little fruit, and that you'd been just as much gainers had you never stirr'd off the spot.

Gusman. And prithee, Sganarel, tell me what reason can inspire thee with so ill-boding a fear? Has thy master open'd to thee his heart upon this head ; and did he tell thee his coldness to us had oblig'd him to depart?

Sganarel. Not at all, but upon view of the premises, I know pretty near the course of things; and without his having said a word to me, I durst almost lay a wager the matter tends that way. I may perhaps be mistaken, but upon such like subjects experience has give me great lights.

Gusman. What ! should this unforeseen departure be a piece of infidelity in Don John? Cou'd he do this injury to the chaste love of Elvira?

Sganarel. No, no, he's too young yet, and has not the heart ———

Gusman. Can a man of his quality do so base an action?

Sganarel. O, yes, his quality ! The reason is admirable ; he wou'd forbear on that account ———

Gusman. But the sacred ties of marriage are an engagement upon him.

Sganarel. Ah ! poor Gusman, my good friend, be-
me, thou dost not yet know what sort of man Don John is.

Gusman. Truly I don't know what sort of man he
may

may be, if he has been guilty of this perfidy towards us; and I don't comprehend how, after so much love, and such impatience express'd, such pressing homage, vows, sighs and tears, so many passionate letters, such ardent protestations and reiterated oaths, such transports in short, and ravings as he shew'd, so far as even to force the sacred obstacle of a convent in his passion, to get Donna Elvira within his power; I don't comprehend, I say, how after all this he shou'd have the heart to fail of his word.

Sganarel. I have no great difficulty, for my part, to comprehend this, and did you know the wanderer, you wou'd think the thing easy enough to him. I don't say he has chang'd his sentiments of Elvira, I have as yet no certainty of it; you know that by his order I set out before him, and since his arrival he has had no discourse with me; but by way of precaution, I give thee to know (*inter nos*) you see, in Don John my master, one of the greatest villains the earth ever bore; a mad man, a dog, a demon, a Turk, a heretic, who neither believes in a heaven, a hell, or devil; who passes his life like a true brute beast, a hog of Epicurus, a true Sardanapalus; who shuts his ears against all remonstrances that can be made him, and treats our whole belief as an old wife's tale. You tell me he has marry'd your mistress; believe me, he wou'd have done more for his passion, and with her wou'd have marry'd even thee, his dog, or his cat. A marriage costs him nothing the contracting, 'tis his most usual snare to trepan the fair sex: and he marries at all adventures, lady, gentlewoman, citizen, country-woman, he thinks nothing too hot, or too cold for him; and shou'd I tell thee the names of all those whom he has marry'd in different places, the

314 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

bead-roll wou'd last till mid-night. You seem surpris'd and change colour at this discourse; this is only a sketch of the man; and to finish the picture wou'd require far stronger strokes of the pencil; let it suffice that the wrath of heaven must some of these days crush him; that I had much better be with the devil than with him, and that he makes me witness of such horrible things, that I cou'd wish he were already I don't know where; but a great lord, a wicked man, is a terrible thing; I must be faithful to him in spite of me; fear in me does the office of zeal, bridles my sentiments, and forces me very often to applaud what my mind detests. See there he comes to take a turn in the palace, let us part. Harkee however, I have trusted you very frankly with this secret, and it has slip'd me a little too quick; but shou'd any things of it happen to reach his ears, I shall say flatly you ly'd.

S C E N E II.

D O N J O H N, S G A N A R E L.

D. J O H N.

WHAT man was that there talking to thee? He has a good deal of the air, I think, of honest Gusman who belongs to Elvira.

Sganarel. 'Tis something very like it.

D. John. What! is it he?

Sganarel. The very man.

D. John. And how long has he been in this city;

Sganarel. Since last night.

D. John. And what subject brings him here?

Sganarel. I fancy you can judge well enough what disturbs him.

D. John. Our departure, without doubt.

Sganarel. The honest man is quite mortify'd, and ask'd me the reason of it.

D. John. And what answer did you make him?

Sganarel. That you had said nothing of it to me.

D. John. But prithee, what dost think of it, what dost thee imagine of this affair?

Sganarel. I? I believe, without wronging you, that you have some new amour in your head.

D. John. Dost think so?

Sganarel. Yes.

D. John. Faith, thou'rt not mistaken, and I must own to thee, that another object has chas'd Elvira from my thoughts.

Sganarel. Oh! Lack-a-day, I have Don John at finger's ends, and know your heart to be the greatest Rambler in the world; 'tis pleas'd to run from chains to chains, and never loves to rest in one place.

D. John. And tell me, dost not think I'm in the right to deal with it in this manner?

Sganarel. Oh! Sir——

D. John. What? speak.

Sganarel. Certainly you are in the right, if you have a mind to't. There's no saying against it; but had you not a mind to't, it might perhaps be another affair.

D. John. Well, I give thee liberty to speak, and to tell me thy sentiments.

Sganarel. In this case, Sir, I shall frankly tell you, I don't approve of your method; and that I think it a base thing to fall in love on all hands, as you do.

D. John. What? wou'd you have one tie one's self

down to the first object that takes us; renounce the world for that, and be blind to every one else? A pretty thing to pique one's self upon the false honour of being faithful, of being buried for ever in one amour, and being dead from our youth to all other beauties that may strike us! No, no, constancy is only fit for fools; every fine woman has a right to charm us; and the advantage of being first met with, ought not to rob others of the just pretensions they all have to our hearts. For my part, beauty ravishes me wherever I find it, and I readily yield to that sweet violence with which it draws us; that I'm engaged signifies nothing, the love I have for one fair, does not engage my heart to do injustice to others; I have eyes to see the merit of 'em all, and to pay every one the homage and tribute that nature obliges us to. However it is, I can't refuse my heart to any lovely creature I see, and from the moment a handsome face demands it, had I a thousand hearts I'd give 'em all. The rising inclinations, after all, have inexplicable charms in 'em, and all the pleasure of love consists in the variety. One tastes an extreme delight in reducing, by a thousand submissions, the heart of a young beauty; to see the little progress one makes in it from day to day; to combat with transports, tears and sighs, the innocent modesty of a mind which can hardly prevail upon itself to surrender; to force, inch by inch, thro' all the little obstacles she throws in our way, to conquer the scruples she values herself upon, and lead her gently whither we've a mind to bring her. But when one is once master of it, there's nothing more to wish; all the beauty of the passion is at an end, and we sleep in the tranquillity of such an amour, if some new object does not awake our desires, and present to us the attractive

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 317

charms of a conquest still to make. In short, there's nothing so delightful as to triumph over the resistance of a beauty : I have the ambition of conquerors, in this case, who fly perpetually from victory to victory, and never can resolve to set bounds to their wishes. There's nothing can resist the impetuosity of my desires ; I find I've a heart to be in love with all the world, and like Alexander, I could wish there were other worlds, that I might carry my amorous conquests thither.

Sganarel. Od's my life, how you rattle ! It seems as if you had this by heart, and you talk for all the world as if 'twere in print.

D. John. What hast thou to say to this ?

Sganarel. Troth, I have to say—I don't know what to say ; you turn things in such a manner that you seem to be in the right, and yet 'tis certain you are not. I had the finest thoughts in the world, and your discourse has put 'em all out o' my head ; let me alone ; another time I'll commit all my reasons to writing, to dispute with you.

D. John. You'll do right.

Sganarel. But, Sir, may it be within the permission you have given me, if I should tell you that I am something scandalized at the life you lead.

D. John. How ? what life is't I lead ?

Sganarel. A very good one. But, for example, to see you marry every month, as you do.

D. John. Is there any thing more agreeable ?

Sganarel. 'Tis true, I conceive this is very agreeable, and very diverting, and I should like it well enough, were there no harm in it ; but, Sir, to trifle thus with marriage, which —

318 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. Go, go, 'tis an affair I shall easily rid myself of, without thy giving thyself any trouble about it.

Sganarel. Troth, Sir, this is scurvy jesting of yours.

D. John. Soho! Mr. Blockhead. You know I've told you, I love none of your remonstrance-makers.

Sganarel. Therefore I don't speak to you, heaven forbid it: You know what you do; and if you are a libertine, you have your reasons; but there are certain little impertinent fellows in the world, who are so, without knowing why or wherefore, who set up for free-thinkers, because they think it becomes them; and had I a master of this kind, I'd tell him flatly to his face, does it become you, little earth-worm, little shrimp as you are, (I speak to the aforesaid master) does it become you, to set yourself to ridicule what all mankind revere. Think ye, because you are a man of quality, because you have a fair well-curl'd perruke, a feather in your hat, a well-lac'd coat and flame-colour'd ribbons, ('tis not you I speak to, 'tis to the other) think ye, I say, that you're e'er the wiser man for this, that you should be allow'd all liberties, and no-body should dare to give you your own for it? Learn from me who am your footman, that libertines never come to a good end, and that —

D. John. Peace.

Sganarel. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. The matter is to tell thee that a certain beauty has got my heart, and that captivated by her charms, I followed her to this city.

Sganarel. And are you under no apprehensions, Sir, about the death of the governor you kill'd six months ago?

D. John. And why apprehensions? did'nt I kill him fairly?

Sganarel. Oh! the fairest in the world, he'd be in the wrong to complain.

D. John. I had my pardon for this affair.

Sganarel. Yes, but this pardon does not perhaps stifle the resentments of relations and friends, and——

D. John. Poh! let us not think of any ill that may happen to us, but think only of what can give us pleasure. The person I speak to you of, is a young creature promis'd in marriage, the most agreeable in the world, who was brought hither by the man she is to marry; and chance threw this pair of lovers in my way, three or four days before they set out on their journey. Never did I see people so satisfied with each other, and discover so much love. The visible tenderneſs of their mutual passion gave me emotion; I was struck to the heart, and my love commenc'd by jealousy. Yes, I could not at first view endure to see 'em so happy together, resentment kindled desire in me; and I conceiv'd it an extreme pleasure to disturb their intelligence, and break that union, the delicacy of which was so offensive to my mind; but hitherto all my attempts have been in vain, and I have recourse to the last remedy; this intended spouse is to regale his mistress to-day, with the diversion of going upon the water. Without saying a word of it to thee, all things are prepared to gratify my passion, and I have a little vessel, and men, by whom I can easily carry off the fair.

Sganarel. Ah! Sir——

D. John. What?

Sganarel. 'Tis mighty well done of yon, and you take things in the right sense. There's nothing in this world like making one's self easy.

D. John. Prepare therefore to go along with me, and

do you yourself take care to bring all my arms, that—
[Sees Donna Elvira.] Oh! most unlucky meeting.
Traitor, thou didst not tell me she was here in person.

Sganarel. Sir, you did not so much as ask me.

D. John. Is she mad not to have changed her dress,
and to come here in her riding habit?

SCENE III.

D. ELVIRA, D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. ELVIRA.

WELL you do me the favour, Don John, to please
to know me, and may I hope at least, you will deign
to turn your eyes this way?

D. John. I confess t'ye, madam, that I am surpriz'd,
and that I did not expect you here.

D. Elvira. Yes, I see plainly you did not expect
me here, and that you are in truth surprized, but in a
quite different way from what I expected, and the man-
ner in which you appear so, gives me a full persuasion
of what I refus'd to believe. I admire at my simplicity,
and the weakness of my heart, in doubting of that
treachery, which so many appearances might have con-
firmed me in. I was harmless enough, I confess, or
rather foolish enough, to be willing to deceive myself,
and to take pains to belye my eyes and my judgment.
I sought for reasons to excuse to my passion that abate-
ment of love I discover'd in you; and I purposely forg'd
a hundred just occasions for so hasty a departure, to justify
the crime my reason accus'd you of. In vain was all
that my just suspicions cou'd daily say to me, I rejected
their voice which represented you to me as a criminal,

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 321

and I hearken'd with pleasure to a thousand ridiculous chimeras, which painted you to my heart as innocent; but in short, this meeting permits me no longer to doubt, and the look you receiv'd me with, informs me of much more than I wou'd ever have wish'd to have known. I shall be glad, nevertheless, to hear from your own mouth the reasons for your departure. Pray, speak, Don John, let us see with what an air you can justify yourself.

D. John. Madam, here is Sganarel knows why I came away.

Sganarel whispering Don John.] I, Sir! with submission, I know nothing of it.

D. Elvira. Well, Sganarel, speak. No matter from whose mouth I hear his reasons.

D. John making signs to Sganarel to come near him.] Come tell the lady then.

Sganarel whispering Don John.] What would you have me say?

D. Elvira. Come hither, since he will have it so, and tell me a little the cause of so sudden a journey.

D. John. Won't you answer?

Sganarel whispering Don John.] I have nothing to answer. You joke with your humble servant.

D. John. Will ye answer, I say?

Sganarel. Madam —

D. Elvira. What?

Sganarel turning towards his master.] Sir —

D. John threatening him.] If —

Sganarel. Madam, the conquerors, Alexander and the other worlds, are the cause of our departure; that's all I can say, Sir.

D. Elvira. Will you be pleas'd, Don John, to clear up these pretty mysteries?

D. John. Madam, to say the truth——

D. Elvira. Fy! How poorly do you go about to defend yourself for a man who is a courtier, and who shou'd be accustomed to these sort of things! I really pity you, to see you in that confusion; why don't you arm your front with a noble impudence? Why don't you swear that you still entertain the same sentiments for me, that you love me eternally with an unparallel'd affection, and that nothing but death is capable of rending you from me? Why don't you tell me that affairs of the last consequence oblig'd you to set out, without giving me notice of it, that, much against your will, you must stay here for some time, and that I need only to return from whence I came, assured that you will follow me as soon as possible? That 'tis certain you are impatient to be with me again, and that, separated from me, you suffer what the body does when separated from the soul? Thus it is you should defend yourself, and not stand thunder-struck as you do.

D. John. I own to you, madam, I have not the talent of dissimulation, and that I wear a sincere heart. I won't tell you that I have still the same sentiments for you, and that I am impatient to rejoin you, since 'tis certain, in reality, that I only came away to avoid you; not for the reasons that you may imagine, but thro' a pure motive of conscience, and because I could not think I could live any longer with you, without sin. I have had some scruples, madam, and opened the eyes of my mind upon what I was a doing. I reflected that to marry you, I fore'd you from the cloister of a convent, that you have broke your vows which engaged you another way, and that heaven is very jealous of those sort of things. I was seized with repentance, and dreaded the

wrath of heaven. I thought our marriage was only adultery in disguise, and that it would bring down some calamity upon us from above, and that, in short, I ought to endeavour to forget you, and to give you the opportunity of returning to your former bonds. Would you, madam, oppose so holy a resolution, and have me, by retaining you, expose myself to the vengeance of heaven? That by——

D. Elvira. Oh! abandon'd villain; now do I know thee thoroughly, and to my misfortune I know thee when 'tis too late, and when this knowledge can only serve to make me desperate; but know, thy crime will not remain unpunish'd: and that that heaven thou dar'st to mock, will revenge thy perfidy.

D. John. Madam——

D. Elvira. 'Tis enough, I'll hear no more, and I even accuse myself for having heard too much already. 'Tis a meanness too far to explain what tends to our disgrace, and upon such subjects a noble spirit shou'd fix its resolution at the first word. Don't expect I should exclaim against thee in reproaches and opprobrious language; no, no, I have no fury to spend in vain words, but all my heat is reserv'd for vengeance. I tell it thee once more, that heaven will punish thee, perfidious man, for the wrong thou dost me; and if thou hast nothing to fear from heav'n, at least fear the anger of an injur'd woman.

SCENE IV.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL *afide*.

IF ever remorse could seize him.—

D. John after some pause.] Come along, let us think of the execution of our amorous enterprize.

Sganarel alone.] Oh! what an abominable master am I forc'd to serve!

ACT II. SCENE I.

CHARLOTTA, PIERROT.

CHARLOTTA.

I' FAKINS, Pierrot, yau weer theer in the vara nick o' time.

Pierrot. S'bobs, they were within eams eace of being drawnded, boath of 'um.

Charlotta. What it was the greit storm o' waind this morn, that o'orset 'um in the seea?

Pierrot. Eye, marry, Charlotta, I'll tell thee aut-right haw it fell aut; for, as the zaying iz, I spy'd 'um aut ferst, ferst I spy'd 'um aut. Soa in short, I was o' th' seea side, I and fat Lucas, and we were a pleying the roague together, wi' clods o' yearth, that we threw at won another's heids, for yaw vara weell known, fat Lucas loves to pley the roague, and I sumtimes pley the roague too. Soa as we were pleying the roague, sens wee must e'en pley the roague, I parceav'd a greit distance off, sumthing that sterr'd in the weter, and it came bobbing taw'rds us. I look'd earnestly at it, and

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 313

belive au' of a sudden I saa that I saa noathing moor. Whew! Lucas, says I, I think thear are two men a swimming dawn thear. Pooa, says he, yaw cyn are not fellows, yaw cyn are dazzl'd. By th' mefs, says I, my cyn are not dazzl'd, they are men. Noa, noa, says he to me, you're pur-blind. I hou'd a wager, says I, that I be'nt pur-blind, says I, and that they are two men, says I, that are swimming streight hither, says I. By my trath, says he, I hou'd a wager they are not. Wcell, cum on, says I, will yau hou'd ten-pence on't? Marry will I, says he, and to show thee, thear's the muny dawn o' th' nail, says he. I was neather fool, nar fool-hardy, dawn comes I bou'dly upo' th' graund, with fowr silver pennys, and six pen'orth o' ha'pence, as freely, by'r lady, as if I'd drank a mug o' beer: for I'm vara venterfome, and go on helter-skelter. I knew what I dud, hawsomever, for au' my boudness! Soa we had but e'en just leay'd the wager, but we saa the two men vara pleanly, who made signs to us to cum and fetch 'um, and I snatches up the steaks. Cum, Lucas, says I, yaw feen pleanly that they cawn us; let us goa off hand and seave 'um. Noa, says he, they made me loafe. Then had we such a to-doo, that at last, to meak short on't, I preich'd soa much to him, that we gat into a boeat, and then I mead soa much wark, that I gat 'um aut o' wetter, and then I carry'd 'um hoame to th' fire, and then they doff'd 'umfells stark neaked to dry 'umfells, and soa then thear comes two moor o' th' seame cumpany, who weer seav'd boath togither quite alone, and soa then comes Mathurina, and one of 'um had a sheeps eye-taw'rds her. Just e'en soa, Charlotta, aw this happen'd.

316 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Charlotta. Dadn't yaw say, Pierrot, that one of 'um was a great deal handsomer than t'others?

Pierrot. Eye, he's the master, he mun be some greit, greit mon to be seur, for he's gould on his cloas, from top to bottom, and his sarvants are gentlefokes 'umfells, and for aw his bein a greit mon, i'fakes he had bin drawn'd, if I'd not bin theer.

Charlotta. Say you soa?

Pierrot. Oh! by'r Lakin, if't had not been for us, he—

Charlotta. Is he still at yaur haufe stark neaked, Pierrot?

Pierrot. Noa, noa, they aw put on their cloas agean befoor us. Marcy o' me, I newr saw any o' these folks dress 'umfells before, what a parcel o' fiddle-faddle things these courtiers wear! I shou'd loose my sel in 'um, for my part, and I was ameaz'd to see 'em. Marry, Charlotta, they han heare which doesn't stick to their heads, and they putt it on like a heuge cap of unspun flax. They han sarks wi' sleeves that thau and I might get into. Instead o' breeches they han a wardrobe as large as fro' this to Easter. Instead o' doublets, they han little tiny waistcoats that do nat reach to their breech; and instead o' bands, a greit neck-hankerchi', wi' four large tufts o' linnen hanging dawn o' their breasts. They han bands about their wrists too, and great raunds o' leace about their legs, and amung aw this so mony ribbons, so mony ribbons, that its borning shame. There's nought about 'um, e'en so much as their shoon but what is stuff'd wi' um fro' one end to t'other, and they're made after such a fashon I shou'd break my neck in 'um.

Charlotta, I'fakins, Pierrot, I mun go see 'um a little.

Pierrot. Oh! hark thee, Charlotta, stay a little ferst, I have something elz to say to thee.

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 327

Charlotta. Weel, tell me, what is't?

Pierrot. Dost see, Charlotta, I mon, as the saying is, break my mind to thee. I'm i' love wi' ye, yaw known it vara weell, I am for us being marry'd together, but s'boddikins, I'm nat pleas'd wi' ye.

Charlotta. Haw? what is the matter then?

Pierrot. Th' matter is yau vexn my vara heart, in good deed.

Charlotta. Haw soa?

Pierrot. Feath yaw done not love me.

Charlotta. Hoh! hoh! Is that aw?

Pierrot. Eye, that's aw, and enough too, o' my conscience.

Charlotta. Lawd, Pierrot, yaw awlas sayn the seam thing to me.

Pierrot. I awlas say the seam thing becaufe it awlas is the seam thing; an if it wern't awlas the seam thing, I would not awlas say the seam thing.

Charlotta. But what mun I doo, what wou'd yaw ha?

Pierrot. Buddakins I'd ha ye love me.

Charlotta. Whya doan't I love thee?

Pierrot. Noa, yaw doan't love me, and for aw that I doo aw I con to meake ye. Noa offence, I buy ribbons for yaw of aw the pedlars that cum about; I break my neck to climb birds-nests for ye, I meak th' ound fidler play for yaw when your borthday cums; and aw this is noa moor than if I run my heid agean the wall: It is neather fear, nor honest, d'ye see, nat to love foulk that loven us.

Charlotta. Whya, weell-a-day, I love thee tew.

Pierrot. Eye, i'fakes, yaw loven me heugely.

Charlotta. Haw wou'd yaw ha' one doo?

328 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Pierrot. I wou'd ha' ye doo as foulk doo, when foulk are in love to sum porpose.

Charlotta. Whya doan't I love thee to sum porpose?

Pierrot. Noa, when that's the cease, it's seen, and one dos a thaufand little apish tricks to foulk when one loves 'um in good earnest. Do but see fat Thomafine, haw hoo's in love like bewitch'd with young Robin; hoo's awlas about him to pleague him, and hoo newer lets him aloane, hoo's awlas a playing him sum unlucky prank, or hits him a rap as hoo goas by him; an t'uther day as he was sitting on a jointstool, hoo cums and whips it fro' under him, and dawn faws he at's foo length, upo'th graund. S'fiesh, foulk don thus when they're i' love: but thou newer saist a word to me, for thy part; thou'rt awlas for aw the ward like a log o' wood, and I mu'd goa by thee twenty times, and thou newer sturr to gi me the least thump, or say the least thing to me. Zooks, it's nat weell dun, after aw, and yaw're too cou'd for foulk.

Charlotta. What wu'n yaw ha' me doo? It's my yumar, and I connot new-mak it my fel.

Pierrot. Yumar me noa yumar, when won loves foulk, won awlas gi's sum smaw inkling on't.

Charlotta. In short, I love thee as weell as I con, and if thou been't content with that, thou mun e'en love sumbody elz.

Pierrot. Why thear naw, didn't I say soa? i'fakes, if yau lov'd me, yau wou'd not say that.

Charlotta. Why dun yaw pleague one so?

Pierrot. Ookers, what harm doo I doo ye? I no! but ask a little love o' ye.

Charlotta. Weell, let won aloan then, and do not

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 329

teaz me soa, happen it may cum aw at wonce, without thinking on't.

Pierrot. Shake honds then, Charlotta.

Charlotta. Weell, thear. [Gives him her hand.]

Pierrot. Promise me then, that you'll strive to love me moor.

Charlotta. I'll doo aw I con, but that mun cum of it sel. Pierrot, is that the gentleman?

Pierrot. Yai, that's he.

Charlotta. Oh! lock-a-day, haw fine a is, and what pity't had bin, if a'd bin drawn'd!

Pierrot. I'se cum agean belive, I'se goa drink a mug to rease my spirits a little after my fatigue.

SCENE II.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL, CHARLOTTA
at the farther part of the stage.

D. JOHN.

WE'VE mist our blow, Sganarel, and this sudden squawl has o'er-set our sloop and our prospect; but to say the truth, the country-wench I have just parted with, repairs this misfortune, and I saw such charms in her, as have banish'd the vexation the ill success of our enterprise had given me. This heart must not escape me, and I have already made such a disposition that I sha'n't sigh long in vain.

Sganarel. I own, Sir, you astonish me. We have scarce escap'd the danger of death, and instead of thanking heaven, for the compassion it has vouchsaf'd to have of us, you take pains afresh to draw down its vengeance by your usual whims, and your amours — [Seeing Don

330 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

John look angry.] Peace, rascal as you are, you don't know what you talk of, and my master knows what he does. Come.

D. John spying Charlotta.] Hah! whence comes this other country-girl? Did you ever see any thing prettier, and tell me, dost not think this as handsome as t'other?

Sganarel. Certainly. [Aside.] Another new piece.

D. John to Charlotta.] What has blest me, my fair one, with this agreeable meeting? What, are there in these rural places, among these trees and rocks, persons of your make?

Charlotta. Just as you see, Sir.

D. John. Are you of this village?

Charlotta. Yes, Sir.

D. John. And do you live there?

Charlotta. Yes, Sir.

D. John. Your name is?

Charlotta. Charlotta, at your service.

D. John. What a beautiful person is there! What piercing eyes are those!

Charlotta. You make me quite ashamed, Sir.

D. John. Oh! don't be ashamed to hear what's true. What d'ye say, Sganarel? Can any thing be more agreeable? Turn about a little, pray. What a fine shape! Hold up your head a little; pray; what a pretty face is this! Open your eyes quite. How lovely they are! Pray, let me see your teeth. Oh! how amorous they are! And these inviting lips. For my part, I'm charm'd, I never saw so fine a person.

Charlotta. Sir, you are pleas'd to say so, and I don't know whether you don't banter me.

D. John. I, banter you? heav'n forbid, I love you

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 331

too much for that, and I speak from the very bottom of my heart.

Charlotta. I am very much oblig'd to you, if it is soa.

D. John. Not at all, you're not oblig'd to me for any thing I say, you are indebted only to your own beauty for it.

Charlotta. Sir, this all too finely said for me, and I have not wit enough to answer you.

D. John. Do but mind her hands, Sganarel.

Charlotta. Fy, Sir, they're as dirty as I doant know what.

D. John. Oh! Why do you say so? They are the prettiest in the world; pray, suffer me to kiss 'em.

Charlotta. You do me too much honour, Sir, and if I'd known it just now, I'd not ha' fail'd to 've wash'd 'em with bran.

D. John. Pray tell me, pretty Charlotta, are you marry'd, or no?

Charlotta. Noa, Sir, but I am to be vara soon, to Pierrot, our neighbour Simonetta's son.

D. John. What, such a person as you, be marry'd to a simple country-fellow? No, no, 'tis profaning so much beauty, and you are not born to live in a village; you plainly merit a better fortune; heaven, which very well knows this, has conducted me hither on purpose to prevent this match, and do justice to your charms: for in short, fair Charlotta, I love you with all my heart, and it shall be entirely your own fault if I don't carry you off from this miserable place, and put you in the condition you deserve. This passion is indeed very sudden; but what then, 'tis an effect, Charlotta, of your great beauty, and one loves you as much in a quarter of an hour, as another in six months.

334 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Charlotta. In good truth, Sir, I doant know haw to behave when you talk. What you say pleases me, and I should have the highest desire in the world to believe you; but I've awlas been tould, that we must never believe the gentlemen, and that your courtiers are wheedlers, who mind nothing but to make fools of young women.

D. John. I am none of those people.

Sganarel aside.] He scorns it.

Charlotta. Look ye, Sir, there's noa pleasure in being impos'd upon, I am a poor country-wench, but I value honour about every thing; I'd sooner choose to die than to lose my honour.

D. John. Shou'd I have a soul so wicked as to impose upon such a person as you, and be so base to debauch you? No, no, I'm too conscientious for that. I love you, Charlotta, in good earnest, and with honour; and to let you see I speak truth, assure yourself I have no other design but to marry you. Wou'd you have a greater proof of it? Here am I ready, whenever you please, and I call this fellow to be witness of the promise I make you.

Sganarel. No, no, never fear. He'll marry you as much as you please.

D. John. Ah! Charlotta, I plainly perceive you don't as yet know me; you do me great wrong to judge of me by others; and if there are cheats in the world, people who mind nothing so much as to impose upon young women, you ought to take me out of the number, and never doubt the sincerity of my love; and besides, your beauty is a security for every thing. Persons of your make are safe from all sort of fears; believe me, you have not the air of one who is to be impos'd upon,

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 333

and for my part, I protest I'd stab myself a thousand times to the heart, had I the least thought of betraying you.

Charlotta. Marry, I doan't know whether you speak truth or no; but you make one believe you.

D. John. You do me justice most certainly, when you believe me, and I repeat to you again the promise I have made you. Don't you accept it? Won't you consent to be my wife?

Charlotta. Yes, provided my aunt will have it so.

D. John. Give me your hand then upon it, Charlotta, since you are pleas'd to agree on your part.

Charlotta. But however, Sir, pray doan't deceive me, it would be a sin; and you see I engage here, very honestly.

D. John. How! do you seem to doubt still of my sincerity? Wou'd you have me swear the most horrible oaths? may heaven——

Charlotta. Bless me, doan't swear, I believe you.

D. John. Give me one little kiss then, as a pledge of your promise.

Charlotta. Nay, Sir, stay till we are married, and after that, I'll kiss you as much as you will.

D. John. Well, pretty Charlotta, just what you please, only give me your hand, and let me, by a thousand kisses, express the ecstasy I am in.

SCENE III.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL, PIERROT,
CHARLOTTA.

PIERROT pushing away Don John as he is kissing Charlotta's hand.

SOFLY, Sir, hou'd an yau please, yau're too hot, yau mayn get a purify.

334 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

*D. John pushing Pierrot again very hard.] What brings this impertinent puppy here?

Pierrot placing himself between D. John and Charlotta.] I say yau mon hon'd, and yau monnat kifs our wives that are to be.

D. John still pushing him.] What a noise is here!

Pierrot. S'blews, yau monnat push foulk soa.

Charlotta catching Pierrot by the arm.] Let him aloan, Pierrot.

Pierrot. Haw, let him aloan? I'll nat let him aloan.

D. John. Hah!

Pierrot. Fleh, because yau're a gentilmon, yau cum heer to kifs our wives under aur noazes, goa and kifs yaur own wife.

D. John. So, so.

Pierrot. And soa, soa, agein. [Don John gives him a box o' th' ear.] Ookers, doan't straike me. [another.] Ats fish! [another.] S'heart. [another.] S'bud and guts, it isn't fair to beat foulk; is this the racompence yau make me for saving yau from being drawn'd?

Charlotta. Doan't be angry, Pierrot.

Pierrot. I will be angry, and thau'rt a pitiful hussy, to let him wheedle thee.

Charlotta. Oh! Pierrot, it isn't as yau thinkn. This gentilmon will marry me, and yau shou'dn't be in a passion.

Pierrot. Haw? I'trath thaur't promis'd to me.

Charlotta. That makes noa matter, Pierrot, if yau lovn me, shou'd ye nat be glad that I'm made a madam?

Pierrot. Wauns, noa, I'fe as soon see thee hang'd, as see thee gi'n to anuther.

Charlotta. Goa, goa, Pierrot, doant fret thyself; if

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 335

I'm a madam, I've gi' thee sumthing, and thou shalt serve aur haufe wi' butter and cheefe.

Pierrot. 'Sblews, ise newer sarve ye wi' any thing an yau wou'd pay me twice as much. What, don yan mind what he says then? Mefs, an I'd known that just naw, ise ha' ta'en greit ceare haw I had ta'en him aut o' th' weter, and I'd ha' g'in him a good rap o' th' heid wi' my oar.

D. John coming up to Pierrot, to strike him.] What's that you say?

Pierrot getting behind Charlotta.] Wawns, ise afraid o' noa mon.

D. John coming tow'rds him.] Let me come up with you.

Pierrot steps o' t'other side o' Charlotta.] I don't care what yau doo.

D. John running after Pierrot.] We shall try that.

Pierrot saving himself still behind Charlotta.] I'a seen mony a mon as good as yau.

D. John. Hey! Hey!

Sganarel. Fy, Sir, let the poor rascal alone, 'tis pity to beat him [placing himself between him and Don John.] [to Pierrot.] Harkee my honest lad, move off, and don't talk to him.

Pierrot passing before Sganarel, and looking fierce at Don John.] I will talk to him.

D. John lifts up his hand to give Pierrot a blow, who ducks down his head, and Sganarel receives it.] Aye, I shall teach ye.

Sganarel looking at Pierrot.] Plague take the booby.

D. John to Sganarel.] That's a reward for thy charity.

Pierrot. I'george, ise goa tell her aunt aw theas fine dooings.

SCENE IV.

DON JOHN, CHARLOTTA, SGANAREL.

D. JOHN to Charlotta.

I N short, I'm going to be the happiest of men, and I would not change my happiness for all the world could give me. What pleasures shall we have, when you are my wife, and what——

SCENE V.

DON JOHN, MATHURINA, CHARLOTTA,
SGANAREL.

SGANAREL seeing Mathurina.

SO, so.

Mathurina to Don John.] Ser, what are yau dooing thear wi Charlotta, are yau coorting her too?

D. John aside to Mathurina.] No; on the contrary, she'd a mind to be my wife, and I told her I was engag'd to you.

Charlotta to Don John] What is't Mathurina wants wi' ye?

D. John aside to Charlotta.] She's jealous at my talking with you, and wants me to marry her; but I tell her, that 'tis you I would have.

Mathurina. What, Charlotta——

D. John aside to Mathurina.] All you can say to her will signify nothing, she has took this into her head.

Charlotta. What then, Mathurina——

D. John aside to Charlotta.] 'Tis in vain to talk to her, you'll ne'er get this whim out of her head.

Mathurina.

Mathurina. Wou'd yau ———

D. John aside to Mathurina.] There's no possibility of bringing her to reason.

Charlotta. I shou'd be ———

D. John aside to Charlotta.] She's obstinate as the d--l.

Mathurina. Truly ———

D. John aside to Mathurina.] Don't talk to her, she's a fool.

Charlotta. I think ———

D. John aside to Charlotta.] Let her alone, she's a silly slut.

Mathurina. No, no, I must talk to her.

Charlotta. I will know some of her reasons.

Mathurina. What ———

D. John aside to Mathurina.] I hold you a wager, she'll tell ye that I've promis'd her marriage.

Charlotta. I ———

D. John aside to Charlotta.] A wager with you that she stands to't, that I've given my word to take her for a wife.

Mathurina. Hark'ee, Charlotta, its nat right to meddle with other foulds bargains.

Charlotta. It isn't honest, Mathurina, to be jealous because the gentilmon talks to me.

Mathurina. The gentlemon saw me ferst.

Charlotta. If he saw thee ferst, he saw me second, and has promis'd to marry me.

D. John aside to Mathurina.] Well, didn't I tell you so?

Mathurina to Charlotta.] Yer humble sarvant, it was me, and not yau he promis'd to marry.

D. John aside to Charlotta.] Didn't I guess right?

Charlotta. Put yaur shams upon others, pray, not upon me, 'twas me, I tell you.

338 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Mathurina. Yau joke with foulk; it was me, once more.

Charlotta. Here's the person can tell you, whether I'm in the right.

Mathurina. Here's the person can give me the lie, if I doan't say true.

Charlotta. Did yau really promise to marry her, Ser?

D. John aside to Charlotta.] You jest, sure.

Mathurina. Is't true, Ser, that yau've promis'd to be her husband?

D. John aside to Mathurina.] Cou'd you have such a thought?

Charlotta. Yau see she affirms it.

D. John aside to Charlotta.] Let her.

Mathurina. Yau are witness haw she avers it.

D. John aside to Mathurina.] Let her aver it.

Charlotta. No, no, we must know the truth.

Mathurina. The matter mun be decided.

Charlotta. Yes, Mathurina, I'd have the gentilmon to shew yau yaur mistake.

Mathurina. Yes, Charlotta, I'd have the gentilmon shew haw yau're baulk'd.

Charlotta. Ser, please to decide the quarrel.

Mathurina. Adjust our difference, Ser.

Charlotta to Mathurina.] Yau'll see.

Mathurina to Charlotta.] Yau'll see too.

Charlotta to D. John.] Say.

Mathurina to D. John.] Speak.

D. John. What would you have me say? You both maintain that I have promis'd to marry you. Don't each of you know the whole of this affair, without any necessity for my explaining further? Why should you oblige me to a repetition in this business? Has not the

person I have really promis'd myself to, reason sufficient within herself, to laugh at the discourse of the other; and should she give herself any uneasiness, provided I make good my promise? Discourses don't at all forward affairs, we must act and not talk, and facts decide much better than words. Therefore that's the only way I shall reconcile you, and you'll see, when I come to marry, which of you has my heart. [aside to Mathurina.] Let her believe what she will. [aside to Charlotta.] Let her flatter herself in her own imagination. [aside to Mathurina.] I adore you. [aside to Charlotta.] I am entirely yours. [aside to Mathurina.] All faces are ugly in sight of yours. [aside to Charlotta.] When one has once seen you, there's no enduring of others. [aloud to both.] I have a trifling order to deliver, I shall wait upon you again in a quarter of an hour.

S C E N E VI.

CHARLOTTA, MATHURINA, SGANAREL.

CHARLOTTA to Mathurina.

I AM the person he loves, however.

Mathurina to Charlotta] I'm the person he'll marry.

[Sganarel stopping Charlotta and Mathurina.] Ah! Poor girls, I pity your innocence, and can't bear to see you run upon your ruin. Believe me both, and don't be impos'd upon by the stories he tells you, but stay in your own village.

S C E N E VII.

D. JOHN, CHARLOTTA, MATHURINA,
SGANAREL.

D. JOHN at the farther part of the stage, aside.]

I WOULD fain know why Sganarel does not follow me.

Sganarel. My master is a knave, he only designs to debauch you, and has debauch'd a good many others; he marries the whole sex, and——[Seeing Don John.] 'Tis false, and whoever may tell you this, you shou'd tell him he lies. My master is not one who marries the whole sex, he's no knave; he has no design to deceive you, nor has he ever debauch'd any person. Oh! stay, here he is, ask him rather.

D. John looking at Sganarel.] Yes.

Sganarel. Sir, as the world is full of scandal, I do things by way of prevention, and I was telling 'em that if any body shou'd say any harm of you, they shou'd be sure not to believe him, and not fail to tell him he ly'd.

D. John. Sganarel.

Sganarel to Charlotta and Mathurina.] Yes, my master is a man of honour, I warrant him such.

D. John. Hem!

Sganarel. They're impertinent rascals.

S C E N E VIII.

D. JOHN, RAMEE, CHARLOTTA,
MATHURINA, SGANAREL.

RAMEE whispering D. John.

SIR, I come to give you notice, that 'tis not proper for you to be here.

D. John. How so?

Ramee. Twelve men on horseback are in search of you, who will be here in a moment; I don't know by what means they can have follow'd you; but I've learnt this news from a country-fellow of whom they enquir'd,

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 341

and to whom they describ'd you. The affair presses, and the sooner you can go hence, the better 'twill be.

D. John to Charlotta and Mathurina.] A pressing affair obliges me to leave this place, but I desire you wou'd remember the promise I made you, and depend upon't you shall hear from me before to-morrow evening. As the match is not equal, we must use stratagem; and dextrously to elude the mischief that pursues me, I'll have Sganarel dress in my cloaths, and I——

Sganarel. A pretty jest, Sir, to expose me to be kill'd in your cloaths, and ——

D. John. Come, quick, I do you too much honour, and happy the servant who can arrive at the glory of dying for his master.

Sganarel. Thank you for the honour. [alone.] Since death is in the case, heav'n grant me the favour not to be taken for another.

ACT III. SCENE I.

DON JOHN in a country-habit,

SGANAREL dress'd as a physician.

SGANAREL.

TROTH, Sir, confess me to be in the right, and that we are both disguis'd to a wonder. Your first design was by no means proper, and this conceals us much better than what you wou'd have done.

D. John. 'Tis true thou art very well, and I can't imagine where thou hast been to unhoard this ridiculous equipage.

Sganarel. Yes; 'tis the habit of an old physician which had been left in pawn in the place where I got

it, and it cost me money to have it. But d'ye know, Sir, that this habit has already plac'd me in some degree of consideration, that I am saluted by the people I meet, and that they consult me as a man of skill?

D. John. How?

Sganarel. Five or six country-fellows and girls, seeing me pass by, came and ask'd my advice upon their different distempers.

D. John. You answered that you knew nothing of the matter.

Sganarel. By no means, I was willing to support the honour of my habit, I reason'd upon the disease, and gave each a prescription.

D. John. And prithee what remedies didst thou prescribe them?

Sganarel. I'troth, Sir, I pick'd 'em up where I cou'd get 'em; I prescrib'd at all adventures, and 'twou'd be a droll thing, if the distempers shou'd be cur'd, and they shou'd come to return me thanks for it.

D. John. And why not? Why shou'd not you have the same privilege as all other physicians have? They've no more share in curing distempers than you have, and all their art is pure grimace. They only receive the honour of happy success, and you may take advantage as they do, of a patient's good luck, and find every thing ascrib'd to your remedies that can proceed either from the favour of chance, or the force of nature.

Sganarel. How, Sir, are you so impious in medicine?

D. John. 'Tis one of the greatest errors of mankind.

Sganarel. What, don't you believe in Senna, nor Cassia, nor Emetic-wine?

D. John. And why wou'd you have me believe in 'em?

Sganarel. You are of a very unbelieving temper. Yet for all this you know the Emetic-wine has made a great bustle of late. Its miracles have converted the most incredulous minds; and 'tis but three weeks ago, that I myself, who speak t'ye, saw a marvellous effect of it.

D. John. What?

Sganarel. There was a man who had been in an agony for six days together, they knew not what more to prescribe to him, and none of the remedies took place; at last they took it into their heads to give him the Emetic.

D. John. Recover'd, did he not?

Sganarel. No, he dy'd.

D. John. Th' effect is admirable.

Sganarel. Why, for six whole days he cou'd not die, and that made him die at once. Would you have any thing more efficacious?

D. John. You're right.

Sganarel. But let us drop physick, in which you've no belief, and talk of other things: for this habit gives me spirit, and I'm in the humour of disputing with you. You very well know, that you allow me to dispute, and that you only forbid remonstrances.

D. John. Well?

Sganarel. I wou'd know the bottom of your thoughts, and understand ye a little better than I do. Come, when will you put an end to your debaucheries, and lead the life of an honest man?

D. John lifts up his hand to strike him.] Hey! Mr. Blockhead! you're immediately at your remonstrances.

Sganarel (stepping back.) 'Sheart, I am a blockhead indeed to concern myself about reasoning with you; do what you please, 'tis a mighty matter to me whether you undo yourself or not, and whether —

344 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. Peace. Let us mind our affair. Aren't we out of our way? Call that man there below us, and ask him the road.

SCENE II.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL, FRANCISCO.

SGANAREL.

SOHO, soho there, you man. Ho, gaffer, Ho, friend, a word with you, pray. Direct us in the way that leads to the town.

Francisco. You need only follow that path, gentlemen, and turn on your right-hand when you come to the end of the forest. But I give you notice to be upon your guard, for there have been robbers hereabouts, for some time past.

D. John. I'm oblig'd to thee, friend, and thank thee, with all my heart, for thy good advice.

SCENE III.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

HA! Sir, what a noise, what a clashing is there?

D. John looking into the wood.] What's that there, one man attack'd by three? the match is too unequal, and I must not suffer this baseness. [Draws his sword, and runs to the place of combat.]

SCENE IV.

SGANAREL alone.

MY master's a very mad-man, to throw himself in-

to danger unsought-for; but i' troth, the succour has
succeeded, the two have put the three to flight.

SCENE V.

D. JOHN, D. CARLOS, SGANAREL
at the farther part of the stage.

D. CARLOS.

I SEE by the scampering of these villains, how much
I owe to your arm. Permit me, Sir, to return you thanks
for so generous an action, and to——

D. John. I have done nothing, Sir, but what you
wou'd have done in my place. Our honour is concern'd
in such adventures, and the action of these rascals was
so base, that 'twou'd have been taking their part, not to
have oppos'd them. But by what accident fell you in-
to their hands?

D. Carlos. I had wander'd by chance from a brother
of mine, and the rest of our company; and as I was en-
deavouring to join 'em again, I met with these robbers,
who immediately kill'd my horse, and wou'd have done
as much for me, had it not been for your valour.

D. John. Is your design to go towards town?

D. Carlos. Yes, but without going into it; my bro-
ther and I are oblig'd to keep in the country, on ac-
count of one of those troublesome affairs which oblige
gentlemen to sacrifice themselves and their families to
the severity of their honour, since, in short, the most
favourable success is always fatal, and if one don't lose
one's life, one's forc'd to quit the kingdom; and this is
what I think the rank of a gentleman unhappy in, not
to be able to secure himself by all the prudence and jus-
tice of his own conduct, from being subject by the laws

of honour, to the unruliness of another man's conduct, nor from having his life, repose and property depend on the freaks of the first audacious rascal who shall take it into his head to commit one of those injuries which an honest man must lose his life for.

D. John. One has this advantage, that we make those run the same risque, and pass their time as ill, who take the fancy of injuring us out of meer wantonness. But were it a piece of indiscretion to ask what your affair may be?

D. Carlos. The thing is not upon terms of making any longer a secret of it; and when an injury once breaks out, our honour does not oblige us to conceal our shame, but to blaze abroad our vengeance, and even to publish our intention. Therefore, Sir, I shall not scruple telling you, that the offence we want to revenge is that of a sister seduc'd, and carry'd off from a convent, and that the author of this injury is D. John Tenorio, son of D. Lewis Tenorio. We've sought him for some days, and we pursu'd him this morning upon the report of a servant, who told us that he went out on horseback, and that he came along this way; but all our pains have been to no purpose, and we can't discover what's become of him.

D. John. D'ye know this Don John, Sir, whom you speak of?

D. Carlos. No, I, for my part, don't. I never saw him, and I have only heard him describ'd by my brother; but fame says no great good of him; he is a man whose life ———

D. John. Hold, Sir, if you please, he is something of a friend of mine, and 'twould be a kind of baseness in me, only to hear any ill spoke of him.

D. Carlos. Out of respect to you, Sir, I shall say nothing of him; 'tis certainly the least thing I owe you, when you have sav'd my life, to forbear speaking before you of a person who is your acquaintance, when I can speak nothing but ill of him; but be you ever so much his friend, I presume to hope you wou'd not approve of this action of his, or think it strange that we should endeavour to revenge it.

D. John. On the contrary; I'll serve you in this affair, and spare you the fruitless trouble. I am Don John's friend, I can't help being so, but it is not reasonable that he should injure gentlemen with impunity, and I engage for him, he shall give you satisfaction.

D. Carlos. And what satisfaction can be given for these sort of injuries?

D. John. All that your honour can wish; and without giving you the trouble of enquiring further after D. John, I answer he shall be forth-coming wherever you please, and when you please.

D. Carlos. This expectation, Sir, is very agreeable to injur'd minds; but after what I owe you, it would be a sensible grief to me, should you be of the party.

D. John. I am so far attach'd to D. John, that he can't fight but I must fight too: but in short, I answer for him as of myself, and you need only say when you would have him appear, and give you satisfaction.

D. Carlos. How cruel is my destiny! That I should owe my life to you, and D. John be one of your friends!

S C E N E VI.

DON ALONZO, DON CARLOS,
DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. ALONZO speaking to his attendants, without seeing
Don Carlos or Don John.]

LET my horses drink there, and then lead them
after us, I'll walk a little. [seeing them both.] Heavens!
What do I see? What, brother, keep company with our
mortal enemy?

D. Carlos. Our mortal enemy?

D. John clapping his hand to his sword.] Yes, I am
D. John himself, and your advantage as to number,
shall not oblige me to disown my name.

D. Alonzo drawing his sword.] Traitor, thou art a
dead man, and —

D. Carlos. Ah! Hold, brother, I owe my life to him,
and had not his arm reliev'd me, I had been kill'd by
the robbers I met with.

D. Alonzo. Wou'd you let this consideration prevent
our vengeance? All the services the hand of an enemy
may do us, are of no merit to engage our heart; and if
we are to measure the obligation by the injury, your
gratitude is in this case ridiculous; as honour is infinitely
more precious than life, 'tis properly owing nothing, to
owe one's life to him who takes away our honour.

D. Carlos. I know the difference, brother, that a
gentleman should always make 'twixt one and t'other;
and gratitude for the obligation does not efface in me
the resentment for the injury; but permit me here to
restore to him what he has lent me, let me acquit my-
self immediately, for the life I owe him, by a delay of

our vengeance, and allow him the liberty of enjoying a few days, the fruit of his good office.

D. Alonzo. No, no, to defer is to hazard revenge, and an opportunity of taking it may never return; heaven now makes an offer of it, and 'tis our part to improve it. When honour is mortally wounded, one should not think of keeping any measures: and if you refuse to lend me your assistance in this action, you need only retire, and leave to my arm the glory of such a sacrifice.

D. Carlos. Pray, brother——

D. Alonzo. All this discourse is superfluous; he must die.

D. Carlos. Hold, I say, brother, I won't suffer an attempt upon his life; and I swear by heaven I'll defend him against any one whatsoever; I'll make that life he has saved to be his defence; and if you make a pass at him, it must be thorough me.

D. Alonzo. What, d'ye side with our enemy against me? And so far from being seiz'd with the same transports that I feel at sight of him, d'ye discover sentiments of compassion for him?

D. Carlos. Brother, let us shew moderation in a lawful action, and not revenge our honour with that fury which you shew. Let us wear a heart that we are masters of, and a valour that has nothing savage in it, and which proceeds by pure deliberation of our reason, not by the impulse of a blind rage. I won't be in debt, brother, to my enemy, and I have an obligation to him, which I must quit before every thing else. Our revenge will not be the less signal, for being deferr'd; on the contrary, it will receive advantage by it, and this op-

portunity we had of taking it, will make it appear more just in the eyes of all the world.

D. Alonzo. O, the strange weakness and horrible blindness, to hazard in this manner the interests of our honour, for the ridiculous notion of a chimerical obligation!

D. Carlos. No, brother, give yourself no trouble about that; if I commit a fault, I shall make abundant amends for it, and I take upon me all the care of our honour, I know what it obliges us to, and this suspension for a day, which my gratitude demanded in favour of him, will only increase the ardour I have to do justice to it. You see, D. John, I am solicitous to return you the favour I have receiv'd, and by this you are to judge of the rest, to believe I acquit myself with the same warmth of every thing I owe, and that I shall not be less exact in repaying you the injury than the favour. I won't oblige you to explain your sentiments now, and I give you the liberty to think at leisure what resolutions you are to take. You very well know the greatness of the injury you have done us, and I make you judge what reparation it demands. There are mild ways of giving us satisfaction; there are violent and bloody ones; but in short, whatever choice you may make, you have pass'd your word to me to give me satisfaction by D. John, pray mind to do so, and remember that, out of this place, I owe nothing more but to my honour.

D. John. I have asked nothing of you, and shall keep my word with you.

D. Carlos. Come, brother, a moment's mildness does no injury to the severity of our duty.

SCENE VII.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. JOHN.

S O ho! Hey! Sganarel! [Sganarel coming out of a place where he had hid himself.] Your pleasure. Sir.

D. John. How, rascal, d'ye run away when I'm attack'd?

Sganarel. Pardon me, Sir, I only come from just there; I believe this habit is purgative, and that to wear it is taking physic.

D. John. Plague o' thy insolence! Wrap thy cowardice in a handsomer cover, at least. Dost know who he is, whose life I sav'd?

Sganarel. I? No.

D. John. 'Tis a brother of Elvira's.

Sganarel. A——

D. John. He's an honest fellow enough, he us'd me very handsomely; and I'm sorry I must quarrel with him.

Sganarel. It would be easy for you to make all things quiet.

D. John. Yes, but my passion for Elvira is wore out, and being engag'd consists not with my humour; you know I love liberty in love; and can't resolve to immure my heart in a prison. I have told thee twenty times, that I've a natural propensity to give way to whatever attracts me. My heart is the property of the fair in general; and they must take it by turn, and keep it as long as they can——But what stately edifice is that I spy in the grove there?

Sganarel. Don't you know it?

352 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. No, truly.

Sganarel. Good, 'tis the tomb which the governor order'd to be built, when you kill'd him.

D. John. Hoh! you're right, I did not know that it was hereabouts. Every body tells me wonders of this piece of work, as well as of the statue of the governor, and I have a mind to go see it.

Sganarel. Don't go there, Sir.

D. John. Why not?

Sganarel. 'Tis not civil to visit a man you have kill'd.

D. John. On the contrary, 'tis a visit I desire to pay him the compliment of, and which he ought to receive with a good grace, if he's any thing of a gentleman. Come, let's go in. [The tomb opens, and discovers the statue of the governor.]

Sganarel. How fine that is! fine statues! fine marble! fine pillars! Oh! how fine that is! what say you of it, Sir?

D. John. That the ambition of a dead man cannot possibly reach further: and what I think wonderful, is that a man who during his life-time dispos'd with an habitation plain enough, would have one so magnificent, when he has no longer occasion for it.

Sganarel. Here's the statue of the governor.

D. John. I'gad, he's admirably set out there in the habit of a Roman emperor.

Sganarel. Troth, Sir, 'tis well made. He seems as if he were alive, and were going to speak. He casts such a look at us as would frighten me if I were quite alone; and I think he does not seem pleas'd at sight of us.

D. John. He would be in the wrong, and it would be an unhandsome reception of the honour I do him. Ask him if he'll come and sup with me.

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 353

Sganarel. That's a thing he has no occasion for, I believe.

D. John. Ask him, I say.

Sganarel. You jest, sure! It wou'd be foolish to speak to a statue.

D. John. Do what I bid you.

Sganarel. What a whim! Mr. Governor——[aside.] I laugh at my folly; but 'tis my master makes me do it. Mr. Governor, my master D. John asks whether you'll do him the honour to come and sup with him. [The statue nods its head.] Ah!

D. John. What's the matter? What ails thee? Tell me, will you speak?

Sganarel nodding his head like the statue.] The statue ——

D. John. Well, what wou'dst thou say, villain?

Sganarel. I say, the statue ——

D. John. Well, what of the statue? Speak, or I'll beat out thy brains.

Sganarel. The statue made a sign to me.

D. John. Plague o' the rascal!

Sganarel. I tell you it made a sign to me, there's nothing more true. Try yourself, and see, perhaps——

D. John. Come, varlet, come; I'll make thee feel thy cowardice with thy finger's ends; observe. Will Mr. Governor, come and sup with me?

[The statue nods the head again.

Sganarel. I wou'd not lay ten pistoles on't. Well, Sir?

D. John. Come, let us be gone.

Sganarel alone.] These are your free-thinkers, who will believe nothing.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL, RAGOTIN.

D. JOHN to Sganarel.

LET it be how it will, drop it. It is but a trifle, and we might be deceiv'd by a false light, or surpris'd with some vapour that disturb'd our sight.

Sganarel. Ah! Sir, don't endeavour to give the lye to what we saw with our own eyes. There is nothing more real than that nod of the head, and I make no doubt but heaven, offended at your way of life, has wrought this miracle to convince you, and reclaim you—

D. John. Harkee. If you teize me any more with your stupid morality, if you say the least word more upon that head, I'll call somebody to fetch a bull's pizzle, I'll have ye held by three or four people, and drub ye with a thousand bastinadoes. D'ye take me?

Sganarel. Oh! very right, Sir, perfectly right; you explain yourself clearly; that's the good of you, that you affect no windings or turnings; you express things with an admirable plainness.

D. John. Come, let me have supper as soon as possible. A chair here, boy.

SCENE II.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL, VIOLETTA,
RAGOTIN.

VIOLETTA.

SIR, here's your tradesman, Mr. Dimanche wants to speak with you.

Sganarel. Good, we want the compliments of a cre-

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 355

ditor, indeed. What's in his head, to come ask money of us? and why didn't you tell him that my master's not at home?

Violetta. I have told him so any time this three quarters of an hour, but he won't believe me, and is sat down there within to wait.

Sganarel. Let him wait as long as he will.

D. John. No, rather let him in; 'tis very bad policy to be deny'd to tradesmen. It's good to pay 'em with something, and I've the secret of sending them away satisfy'd, without giving 'em a halfpenny.

SCENE III.

D. JOHN, Mr. DIMANCHE, SGANAREL,
VIOLETTA, RAGOTIN.

D. JOHN.

HAM, Mr. Dimanche, come this way. How glad am I to see you, and how cou'd I wish my fellows bang'd for not bringing you in immediately! I had given orders not to be spoke with by any body, but this order is not for you, you have a right never to have the door shut against you in my house.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, I am very much oblig'd t'ye.

D. John to Violetta and Ragotin.] 'Sheart, rascals, I'll teach ye to leave Mr. Dimanche in the antichamber, and I'll make you know who is who.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, 'tis no matter.

D. John to Mr. Dimanche.] What? To say I was not within, to Mr. Dimanche, to my very best friend?

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, I'm your servant, I was come—

D. John. Here, quick, a seat for Mr. Dimanche.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, I'm very well as I am.

D. John. No, no, I'll have you sit as well as I.

Mr. Dimanche. 'Tis not necessary.

D. John. Take away this stool, and bring an elbow-chair.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, you jest, and——

D. John. No, no, I know what I owe you; and I won't have 'em make any difference 'twixt us two.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir——

D. John. Come, sit down.

Mr. Dimanche. 'Tis needless, Sir, I want only one word with you. I was——

D. John. Sit you down there, I say.

Mr. Dimanche. No, Sir, I'm mighty well; I come to——

D. John. No, I won't hear you, if you don't sit down.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, I do as you wou'd have me. I——

D. John. Faith, Mr. Dimanche, you are brave and well.

Mr. Dimanche. Yes, Sir, at your service. I came——

D. John. You've an admirable fund of health, ruby lips, vermeil complexion, and sparkling eyes.

Mr. Dimanche. I shou'd be glad——

D. John. How do's Mrs. Dimanche your spouse do?

Mr. Dimanche. Very well, Sir, thank heaven.

D. John. She's a fine woman.

M. Dimanche. She's your humble servant, Sir. I came——

D. John. And your little daughter, Claudina, how does she do?

Mr. Dimanche. Well as possible.

D. John. 'Tis a pretty little girl, I love her with all my heart.

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 357

Mr. Dimanche. You do her too much honour, Sir.
I desire——

D. John. And does little Colin make as much noise as ever with his drum?

Mr. Dimanche. Always the same, Sir. I——

D. John. And your little dog Brusquet? Does he always growl so prodigiously, and does he bite people still as heartily by the heels, that come to your house?

Mr. Dimanche. More than ever, Sir, and we can't quell him.

D. John. Don't be surpris'd, if I inform myself of all the news of your whole family; for I interest myself very much in it.

Mr. Dimanche. We are infinitely oblig'd to you, Sir.
I——

D. John holding out his hand.] Shake hands then, Mr. Dimanche, are you really a friend of mine?

Mr. Dimanche, Sir, I am your servant.

D. John. I'gad, I am yours with all my heart.

Mr. Dimanche. You do me too much honour. I——

D. John. There's nothing I wou'd not do for you.

Mr. Dimanche. Sir, you are too good to me.

D. John. And that without interest, believe me.

Mr. Dimanche. I have not merited this favour, certainly; but Sir——

D. John. Hoh! come, Mr. Dimanche, will you sup with me, without ceremony?

Mr. Dimanche. No, Sir, I must return home immediately. I——

D. John rising up.] Here, a flambeau quick, to light Mr. Dimanche, and let four or five of my fellows take musquets to escort him.

358 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

Mr. Dimanche rising also.] Sir, 'tis needless, I can go very well alone. But——

[Sganarel quickly removes the chairs.

D. John. How? I will have 'em escort you, and I have too much interest in your person; I'm your humble servant, and your debtor to boot.

Mr. Dimanche. Ah! Sir——

D. John. 'Tis a matter I don't conceal, and I tell it to all the world.

Mr. Dimanche. If——

D. John. Would you have me wait upon you back?

Mr. Dimanche. Oh! Sir, you jest. Sir——

D. John. Embrace me then, pray; I desire you once more to rest persuaded that I am entirely yours, and that there's nothing in the world I wou'd not do to serve you.

S C E N E IV.

MR. DIMANCHE, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

IT must be own'd, my master is a man who loves you much.

Mr. Dimanche. 'Tis true; he pays me so many civilities, and so many compliments, that I can never ask him for mony.

Sganarel. I do assure you, all his family wou'd die for you; and I wish something wou'd happen to you, that somebody wou'd take it into his head to cudgel you, you'd see in what manner——

Mr. Dimanche. I believe it; but Sganarel, pray speak a word to him about my mony.

Sganarel. Oh! give yourself no trouble, his pay is as good as any in the world.

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 359

Mr. Dimanche. But, you, Sganarel, you owe me something on your own account.

Sganarel. Fy, don't speak of that.

Mr. Dimanche. How? I —

Sganarel. Don't I know very well that I'm in your debt?

Mr. Dimanche. Yes, but —

Sganarel. Come, Mr. Dimanche, I'll light you.

Mr. Dimanche. But my money —

Sganarel taking Mr. Dimanche by the arm.] You jest, sure.

Mr. Dimanche. I will —

Sganarel pulling him.] Nay.

Mr. Dimanche. I understand —

Sganarel pushing him towards the door.] Trifles.

Mr. Dimanche. But —

Sganarel pushing him again.] Fy.

Mr. Dimanche. I —

Sganarel pushing him quite off the stage.] Fy, I say.

SCENE V.

DON JOHN, VIOLETTA, SGANAREL.

VIOLETTA to D. John.

SIR, here's your father.

D. John. So, I'm finely fitted. There wanted but this visit to make me mad.

SCENE VI.

D. LEWIS, D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. LEWIS.

I SEE plainly I disturb you, and that you cou'd easily have dispens'd with my coming. To say the truth,

we are each of us strangely troublesome to the other, and if you are tir'd with seeing me, I am likewise very much tir'd with your behaviour. Alas! how little do we know what we do, when we leave not to heaven the care of what we want, when we will be wiser than that, and importune it by our blind wishes, and inconsiderate demands! I wish'd with unparallel'd ardour for a son, and incessantly pray'd for one with incredible transports; and this son which I obtain'd by wearying heaven with my prayers, is the plague and punishment even of that life, of which I thought he wou'd be the joy and consolation. With what eye, in your opinion, d'ye think I can look on the multitude of unworthy actions, whose scurvy appearance we have much ado to palliate in the eyes of the world, that continu'd series of villainous affairs, which hourly reduce us to weary the goodness of our sovereign, and which have exhausted the merit of my services, and the credit of my friends? Oh! what baseness is yours! don't you blush so little to deserve your birth? Have you any right, pray tell me, to be vain of it? And what have you done in the world to make you a gentleman? D'ye think it sufficient to bear the name and the arms of one, or that 'tis any honour to be sprung from noble blood when we live infamously? No, no; birth is nothing, where there's no virtue. Therefore we have no share in the glory of our ancestors, any further than we exert ourselves to resemble them, and that splendor of their actions, which they throw upon us, lays an obligation upon us of doing the same honour to them, of following their steps, and by no means degenerating from their virtues, if we wou'd be esteem'd their true descendants. So that 'tis in vain that you descend from the ancestors from whom you spring, they disown you

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 361

you for their blood, and all the illustrious things they have done, give you no advantage; on the contrary, their lustre reflects upon you only to your dishonour, and their glory is a torch which shews the infamy of your actions in the most glaring light to the eyes of the whole world. Know, in short, that a gentleman who lives ill, is a monster in nature, that virtue is the prime title to nobility, that I look much less upon the name we subscribe, than the actions that we perform, and that I shou'd value more being the son of a porter, who was an honest man, than the son of a monarch who liv'd as you do.

D. John. If you wou'd sit down, Sir, you'd talk more at your ease,

D. Lewis. No, insolent wretch, I'll neither sit down nor talk more, for I plainly see my words have no effect upon your mind; but know, unworthy son, that the paternal tenderness is by your actions drove to its last extremity, I shall, sooner than you think of, put a stop to your irregularities, prevent the vengeance of heaven upon you, and by your punishment wash off the shame of having given you life.

SCENE VII.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. JOHN.

WHY, die as soon as you can, 'tis the best thing you can possibly do. Every one shou'd have their turn, it makes me mad to see fathers live as long as their children.

[Throws himself down in his elbow-chair.

Sganarel. Oh! Sir, you're to blame.

VOL. II.

Q

362 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. [rising up.] I to blame?

Sganarel trembling.] Sir——

D. John. Am I to blame?

Sganarel. Yes, Sir, you're to blame for bearing what he said to ye, and you shou'd ha' turn'd him out by head and shoulders. Did ever any body see any thing more impertinent? a father to come and remonstrate to his son, bid him reform his actions, remind him of his birth, to live the life of an honest man, and a hundred other silly things of the like nature! Is it to be bore by such a man as you, who know how you ought to live? I wonder at your patience, and had I been in your place, I shou'd ha' sent him a packing. [Aside.] Oh! cursed complaisance, whither dost thou reduce me?

D. John. Will you get supper ready presently?

S C E N E VIII.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL, RAGOTIN.

RAGOTIN.

SIR, here's a lady in a veil wants to speak with you.

D. John. Who can that be?

Sganarel. You must see.

S C E N E IX.

D. ELVIRA veil'd, D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. ELVIRA.

DON'T be surpriz'd, Don John, to see me at this hour, and in this equipage. 'Tis a pressing motive that obliges me to this visit, and what I have to say to you, will admit of no delay. I don't come here, full of that wrath which I discover'd a little while ago, and you'll

see me much alter'd from what I was this morning. 'Tis no more that Donna Elvira who utter'd imprecations against you, whose irritated mind discharg'd nought but menaces, and breath'd only revenge. Heaven has banish'd from my mind all that unworthy passion I entertain'd for you, all those tumultuous transports of a criminal attachment, all those shameful ravings of a terrestrial and gross love; it has left nothing in my heart, in respect to you, but a flame refin'd from all the commerce of sense, a tenderness intirely sacred, a love detach'd from every thing, which has no self-views, nor any concern but for your interest.

D. John whispering Sganarel.] Methinks you weep.

Sganarel. Pardon me.

D. Elvira. 'Tis perfect and pure love which brings me hither for your good, to impart to you a warning from heaven, and endeavour to recal you from the precipice upon which you run. Yes, Don John, I know all the irregularities of your life, and that same heaven which touch'd my heart, and turn'd my eyes upon the errors of my own conduct, has inspir'd me to wait upon you, and to tell you from it, that your offences have exhausted its mercy, that its dreadful anger is ready to fall upon you, that it is in your choice to avoid it by a speedy repentance, and that perhaps you have not another day to save yourself from the greatest of all miseries. For my part, I am no longer attach'd to you by any ties of this world. I am reclaim'd, thanks to heaven, from all my foolish thoughts, my retreat is resolv'd upon, and I desire only to live long enough to expiate the crime I have committed, and to merit pardon by an austere penance, for the blindness which the transports of a guilty passion have plung'd me into; but in this retreat, I shou'd be

extremely griev'd that a person I once tenderly lov'd should be made a fatal example of the justice of heaven, and 'twill be an unspeakable joy to me, if I can prevail upon you, to ward off the dreadful blow that threatens you. Pray, Don John, grant me, as for the last favour, this soothing consolation, refuse me not your own happiness, which I ask with tears; and if you're not mov'd by your own interest, be so, at least by my intreaties, and spare me the cruel affliction of seeing you condemn'd to eternal punishment.

Sganarel aside.] Poor lady!

D. Elvira. I once lov'd you with an extreme tenderness; nothing in this world was so dear to me as your self; I forgot my duty for your sake; I have done every thing for you; and all the recompence I beg for it, is to reform your life, and prevent your ruin. Save yourself, I beseech you, either for love of your self, or for love of me. Once more, Don John, I ask it of you with tears, and if the tears of a person you once lov'd are not sufficient, I conjure you to do it, by all that's most capable of moving you.

Sganarel aside.] Heart of tiger!

D. Elvira. After I've said this, I am gone; and this is all I had to say.

D. John. Madam, 'tis late, stay here. We shall lodge you in the best manner we can.

D. Elvira. No; Don John, detain me no longer.

D. John. Madam, you'll oblige me in staying, I assure you.

D. Elvira. No, I tell you, let us not lose time in superfluous discourse, let me go immediately, don't insist upon waiting on me back, but only think of profiting by my advice.

SCENE X.

D. JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. JOHN.

DOST know now, that I felt some little emotion for her once again, that I thought there was something agreeable in that whimsical novelty, and that her negligent dress, her languishing air, and her tears awak'd in me some small remains of an extinguish'd flame?

Sganarel. That's as much as to say, her discourse had no manner of effect upon you.

D. John. Supper, quickly.

Sganarel. Very well.

SCENE XI.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL, VIOLETTA, RAGOTIN.

D. JOHN sitting down to table.

SGANAREL, we must think of reforming nevertheless.

Sganarel. Aye, marry must we.

D. John. Yes, faith, we must reform; twenty or thirty years more of this life, and then we'll consider of it.

Sganarel. Ah!

D. John. What say'st thou to't?

Sganarel. Nothing. Here comes supper. [He takes a bit from one of the dishes that was brought, and puts it into his mouth.]

D. John. Methinks thy cheek is swell'd, what is the matter with it? Speak, what hast thou there?

Sganarel. Nothing.

D. John. Let me see a little. Ods'o, 'tis an humour that's fall'n upon his cheek; quick there, a lancet to open it. The poor fellow can't subsist long under it, and this imposthume may choak him; stay, see how ripe it is. How? rascal —

Sganarel. Troth, Sir, I was willing to see whether your cook had not put in too much salt, or pepper.

D. John. Come, place thyself there and eat. I have business with thee, as soon as I have supp'd; you're hungry, I perceive by ye.

[Sganarel sits down to table.] I'm very apt to believe so, Sir, I have not eat since morning. Taste that, 'tis exceeding good. [a footman takes Sganarel's plates away, as soon as he has got any thing upon 'em to eat.] My plate, my plate. Softly, if you please. 'Sblews, little gaffer, how nimble you are in giving one empty plates; and you, little Violetta, how ready you are in giving one some drink! [whilst one footman gives Sganarel something to drink, the other still takes away his plate.]

D. John. Who can it be that knocks in that manner?

Sganarel. Who the duce comes to disturb us at our meal?

D. John. I would sup in quiet however, therefore let no body come in.

Sganarel. Let me alone, I'll go to the door myself.

D. John [seeing Sganarel return frightened.] What ails you? What's the matter?

Sganarel [nodding his head as the statue did.] The—who is there.

D. John. Let us go see, and shew that nothing can stagger me.

Sganarel. Ah! poor Sganarel, where wilt thou hide thyself?

SCENE XII.

DON JOHN, THE STATUE of the governor,
SGANAREL VIOLETTA, RAGOTIN.

D. JOHN to his servants.

A CHAIR and a plate here, quick. [D. John and the statue sit down at the table.] Come, sit down.

[To Sganarel.

Sganarel. Sir, I'm not hungry now.

D. John. Sit down there, I say. Let us drink. The governor's health. I drink it to thee, Sganarel. Give him some wine.

Sganarel. Sir, I'm not thirsty.

D. John. Drink, and sing that catch of thine, to regale the governor.

Sganarel. I've got a cold, Sir.

D. John to his servants.] No matter, come. You there, come and sing along with him.

The Statue. 'Tis enough, Don John; I invite you to come sup with me to-morrow. Will you be so bold?

D. John. Yes; I'll go with only Sganarel along with me.

Sganarel. I thank ye, to-morrow's fast-day with me.

D. John to Sganarel.] Take this flambeau.

The Statue. There's no need of light, when we are conducted by heaven.

ACT V. SCENE I.

DON LEWIS, DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. LEWIS.

HOW, my son, is it possible that the mercy of heaven shou'd have heard my prayers? Is what you tell me really true? Don't you deceive me, with false hope? And may I rest assur'd of the surprising novelty of such a conversion?

D. John. Yes, you see me reclaim'd from all my errors, I am no more the same since last night, and heaven has wrought a change in me at once, which will surprize all the world. It has touch'd my heart, and open'd my eyes, that I reflect with horror on the long blindness I was in, and the criminal disorders of the life I lead. I run over in my mind all my abominations, and am astonish'd that heaven cou'd bear with me so long, and that it has not twenty times discharg'd the thunder of its justice on my head. I see the favours its mercy has shewn me, in not punishing my crimes, and I intend to make a due improvement of 'em, to discover to all the world a sudden change of life, to repair, by that means, the scandal of my past actions, and strive to obtain of heaven a full remission. This is what I am now endeavouring; and I beg of you, Sir, to contribute to this design, and to assist me in making choice of a person who may serve me as a guide, and under whose conduct I may walk safely in the way I'm entering upon.

D. Lewis. Ah! Son, how easily is the tenderness of a father recall'd, and the offences of a son instantly vanish at the least mention of repentance! I have already lost all memory of all the sorrows you have occasion'd

me, and all is effaced by the words I have just now heard. I confess, I'm not myself, I shed tears of joy, all my pray'rs are answer'd, and henceforth I have nothing to ask of heaven. Embrace me, my son, and persist, I conjure you, in this laudable design. For my part, I fly immediately to carry the happy news to your mother; to share with her the sweet transports of delight I feel, and to return thanks to heaven for the holy resolutions it has vouchsaf'd to inspire you with.

SCENE II.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

AH, Sir, what joy does it give me to see you re-form'd, I have long been waiting for this, and now, thanks to heaven, all my wishes are accomplish'd.

D. John. Plague o' the booby!

Sganarel. How, booby?

D. John. What, dost take all I've said for true sterling? And dost think my mouth acted in concert with my heart?

Sganarel. How, why isn't it—Don't you—your—
[aside.] Oh! what a man! what a man! what a man is this!

D. John. No, no, I'm no changling, my sentiments are always the same.

Sganarel. What, don't you yield to the surprising miracle of a moving and speaking statue?

D. John. Why really there is something in that which I don't comprehend; but be it as it will, it is not capable either of convincing my judgment, or staggering my mind; and if I said I wou'd reform my conduct, and

enter upon an exemplary life, 'twas a design I had form'd out of pure policy, an useful stratagem, a necessary piece of grimace, to which I am willing to submit, to manage a father whom I have occasion for, and to screen my self, with respect to mankind, from a hundred troublesome adventures that may happen. I make thee my confident in this business, Sganarel, being willing to have a witness of the true motives which oblige me to do these things.

Sganarel. What? though still a libertine, and debauchee, d'ye pretend, at the same time, to set up your self for a good man?

D. John. And why not? there are many others besides myself, who carry on this trade, and make use of the same mask to deceive the world.

Sganarel aside.] Oh! what a man! what a man!

D. John. There's no manner of disgrace in this now-a-days, hypocrisy is a modish vice, and all modish vices pass for virtues. The profession of hypocrisy has marvellous advantages. It is an art, the imposture of which always meets with respect, and tho' one discovers it, one dares not say a word against it. All the other vices of mankind are expos'd to censure, and every one has the liberty of attacking 'em loudly: but hypocrisy is a privileged vice, that shuts every body's mouth, and reigns quietly with a sovereign impunity. By dint of grimace one forms a strict alliance with all the partizans; whoever offends one, draws them all upon his back, and they who we are sure act in good earnest in the affair, and whom we know to be really touch'd: these people, I say, are most frequently the dupes of the others, they run innocently into the net of the hypocrites, and blindly support the apes of their actions. How many of those

dost think I know, who by this stratagem have dextrously patch'd up the disorders of their youth, and under a respected outside have permission to be the most wicked fellows on earth? It signifies nothing that we are acquainted with their intrigues, and know 'em to be what they are, they have not, for all that, the less credit among people, and a certain down-cast look, a mortify'd sigh, and two rolling eyes, set all to rights again, do what they will. 'Tis under this favourable shelter, that I design to secure my affairs. I won't quit my dear habits, but I shall take care co conceal myself, and divert myself with little or no noise. But if I should come to be discover'd, I shall have my whole cabal engage in my interests without my striking a stroke, and I shall be defended against, and in spite of all the world. In short, this is the true way to do whatever I please with impunity. I shall set up myself as a censor of other folks actions, shall judge ill of every body, and have a good opinion of none but myself. When I am once, ever so little offended, I'll never forgive, and very calmly preserve an irreconcilable hatred. I'll act the avenger of oppressed virtue, and under this convenient pretext, I'll pursue my enemies, I'll accuse 'em of impiety, let loose the heady zealots upon 'em, who shall raise an outcry against them without knowing why or wherefore, who shall load 'em with opprobrious names, and roundly damn 'em by their private authority. 'Tis thus we must make our ends of the foibles of mankind, and a wise man will accommodate himself to the vices of the age.

Sganarel. O heavens! What do I hear? You only wanted to be a hypocrite to finish you in all respects, and that's the height of abominations. Sir, this last puts me out of all patience, and I can't forbear speak-

372 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

ing. Do what you will with me, beat me, knock me o' th' head, kill me, I must discharge my conscience, and like a faithful servant, tell you what I ought. Know, Sir, that the pitcher goes so oft to the well, that it comes home broke at last: and as the author very well says, whose name I've forgot, man is in this world like a bird upon a bough, the bough is fix'd to the tree, he who is fix'd to the tree follows: good precepts, good precepts are better than fine words, fine words are found at court, at court are courtiers, courtiers follow the mode, the mode comes from fancy, fancy is a faculty of the mind, the mind is what gives life, life ends in death—and—think what you will come to.

D. John. Excellent reasoning!

Sganarel. After this, if you don't yield, so much the worse for you.

SCENE III.

DON CARLOS, DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

D. CARLOS.

DON John, I meet you *a propos*, and am very glad to speak with you here rather than at home, to ask what are your resolutions. You know this is my concern, and that in your presence I took this affair upon me. For my part, I don't conceal it, I heartily wish things may be manag'd in an amicable way, and there's nothing I wou'd not do to prevail upon your mind to take this method, and to see you publicly confirm to my sister the title of your wife.

[D. John in a hypocritical tone.] Alas! I wou'd, with all my heart, give you the satisfaction you desire, but heaven directly opposes it; it has inspir'd my soul with

the design of reforming my life, and I have now no other thoughts but of intirely quitting all attachment to this world, of stripping myself as soon as possible of all sorts of vanities, and of correcting henceforth, by an austere conduct, all the criminal disorders, into which the heat of blind youth had hurry'd me.

D. Carlos. This design, Don John, clashes not at all with what I say, and the company of a lawful wife may very well consist with the laudable thoughts that heaven has inspir'd you with.

D. John. Alas! By no means. The design is what your sister herself has form'd; she has resolv'd to retire, and we were both touch'd at the same time.

D. Carlos. Her retreat can't give us satisfaction, since it might be imputed to the contempt you had thrown upon her and our family; and our honour requires her living with you.

D. John. I do assure you it can't be; I had for my part all the inclination in the world to it; and I even this day went to ask counsel of heaven about it; but when I consulted it, I heard a voice which told me that I ought not to think of your sister, and that most certainly with her I cou'd not be sav'd.

D. Carlos. D'ye think, Don John, to blind us with these fine excuses?

D. John. I obey the voice of heav'n.

D. Carlos. What? Wou'd you have me be satisfy'd, with such stories as these?

D. John. 'Tis heav'n will have it so.

D. Carlos. Have you taken my sister out of a convent to abandon her at last?

D. John. Heav'n ordains it so to be.

D. Carlos. Shall we suffer such a blot upon our family?

374 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. Seek your redress from heaven.

D. Carlos. Poh! why always heaven?

D. John. Heaven desires it shou'd be so.

D. Carlos. 'Tis enough, Don John, I understand you. I won't take you here, the place will not admit of it; but I shall find you before 'tis long.

D. John. You may do what you please. You know I don't want courage, and that I know how to use my sword when 'tis proper; I am going directly thro' the little by-street which leads to the great convent; but I declare to you, for my own part, I am not for fighting, heaven forbid the thought, and if you attack me we shall see what will come of it.

D. Carlos. We shall see, true, we shall see.

SCENE IV.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL.

SGANAREL.

WHAT the devil of a style are you got into! This is worse than all the rest, and I shou'd like you much better as you were before; I had always some hopes of your being sav'd, but now I despair of it. and I believe heaven which has bore with you hitherto, can never bear with this last abomination.

D. John. Poh! Poh! Heaven is not so strict as you imagine; and, if at all times when men——

SCENE V.

DON JOHN, SGANAREL, Ghost in the form of a woman veil'd.

SGANAREL seeing the Ghost.

AH! Sir, 'tis heaven that speaks to you, 'tis a warning it gives you.

THE FEAST OF THE STATUE. 375

D. John. If 'tis heaven that gives me warning, it must speak plainer, if it wou'd have me understand it.

Ghost. Don John has but one moment longer to lay hold on the mercy of heaven, and if he repents not now, his destruction is determin'd.

Sganarel. D'ye hear, Sir?

D. John. Who is that dares talk so? Methinks I shou'd know that voice.

Sganarel. Ah! Sir, 'tis a ghost, I know it by its stalking.

D. John. Ghost, phantom, or devil, I'll see what it is. [The ghost changes shape and represents Time with his scythe in his hand.]

Sganarel. Oh! Heaven, d'ye observe, Sir, that change of shape?

D. John. No, no, nothing is capable of impressing a terror upon me, I'll try with my sword whether 'tis body or spirit. [The ghost vanishes the instant Don John pushes at it.]

Sganarel. Ah! Sir, yield to so many proofs, and repent immediately.

D. John. No, no, come what will, it shall never be said I was capable of repentance. Come, follow me.

SCENE VI.

The STATUE of the governor, D. JOHN,
SGANAREL.

STATUE.

HOLD, Don John, you gave me your word yesterday to come eat with me:

376 THE FEAST OF THE STATUE.

D. John. Yes; where shall we go?

Statue. Give me your hand.

D. John. There 'tis.

Statue. Don John, obstinacy in wickedness brings on a fatal death; and rejecting the favours of heaven opens a way to its thunder.

D. John. Oh heavens! What do I feel? An invisible flame scorches me, I can bear it no longer, my whole body is a burning fire-brand. Oh! [Loud thunder and great flashes of lightning fall on Don John, the earth opens and swallows him: and flames burst out from the place where he descended.]

SCENE THE LAST.

SGANAREL alone.

BY his death, lo! all are satisfy'd. Offended heaven, violated laws, seduced maids, dishonour'd families, injur'd parents, wives reduc'd to misery, husbands to despair, all the world is satisfy'd; I am the only unhappy person, who, after so many years service, have no other recompence than that of seeing my master's impiety punish'd before my eyes, by the most horrible of all punishments.

THE END.

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